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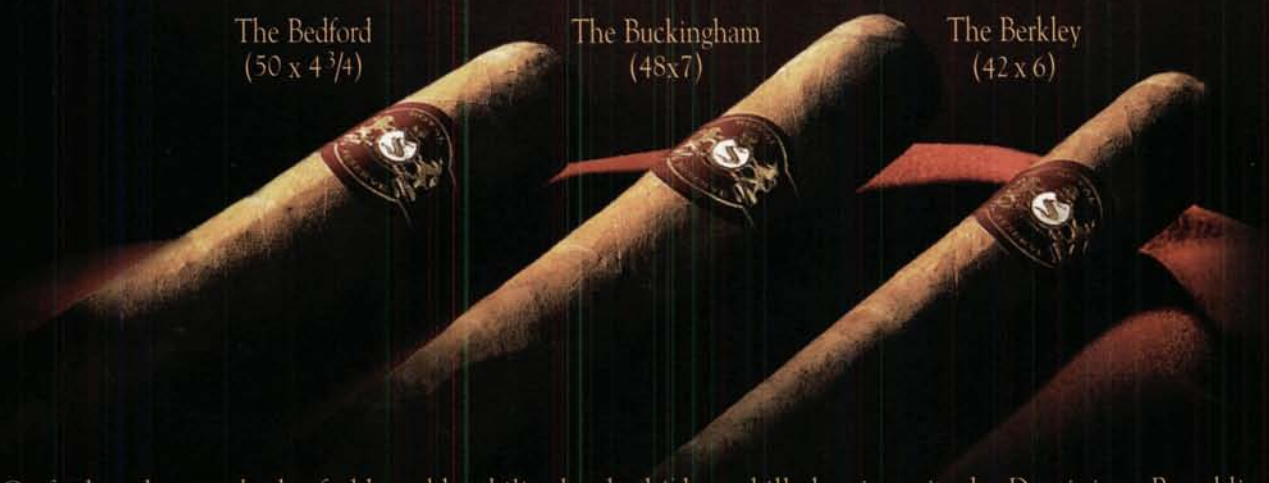

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NATIONAL REVIEW

APRIL 20, 1998 VOL. L, NO. 7

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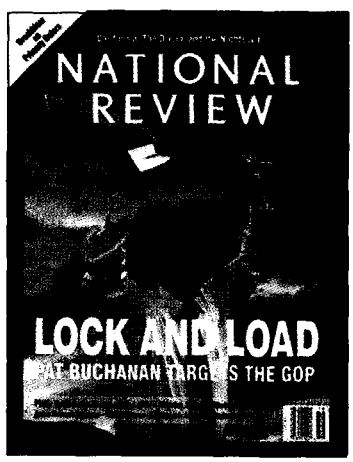

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LETTERS

Remembering the Best of Us

Lionel Chetwynd's superb "Semper Fi" [Feb. 23] generated a myriad of bittersweet memories for me. I had to wait a while before I wrote this letter.

My husband, Major Burke Morgan, was declared MIA in August 1967. There were four of us Air Force wives/widows in this area who waited for years for some definite word about our husbands' fates. Hayden Lockhart (the first AF pilot captured in Vietnam) and Jerry Curtis were among the "lucky ones" who came home during that long-ago February of 1973. Craig Smith and my husband didn't make it.

The joy and pride I felt seeing those Vietnam heroes get off the plane from hell were counterpointed by grief and rage about the heavy price they and thousands of others whose names are on the black wall paid for the freedoms that antiwar Americans used to stage their love-ins, flag burnings, and other acts of contempt for this nation.

Chetwynd is right—the chain of remembrance of those who were the best of us goes on, and will go on; I pray there will always be a few who are grateful for such patriots.

Mary Morgan Craig
Pineville, La.

Making Dartmouth Safe for God

I am happy to see Mr. Buckley raising the important issue of the anti-religious culture of the universities ["Christianize Dartmouth?," March 23]. As he observes, most universities in this country began with at least an acceptance of and in many cases a commitment to religious values, particularly Christian values. The prevailing anti-religious culture is indeed closed minded. Science has not disproved the existence of God, and a truly open and vigorous university would encourage the sincere search for secular truth as well as metaphysical Truth, called "God" by most religions. History teaches that secular cultures collapse of their own weight. The Roman Empire and the twentieth-century Soviet Union are two examples. The framers of the Constitution were by and large unashamed of their belief in God. Our universities do no one a service by creating a closed-minded culture that scorns His existence and those who believe in Him.

James H. McGrew
Washington, D.C.

I believe there is a mathematical error in Mr. Buckley's "Christianize Dartmouth?" He states that "the probability that a bullet randomly fired from the earth will hit a one-inch target at a distance of twenty billion light years" is 10 to the 60th power. Though I am no astrophysicist, I have read, and have no trouble believing, that the universe is overwhelmingly empty. Thus, the probability of a randomly fired projectile striking anything must be infinitesimal, i.e., on the order of 10 to the *minus* 60th power. The same is undoubtedly true of the probability that the randomly typing monkey could create a section of classical prose.

Andrew Scott Widener
Richmond, Va.

We'll Always Have Anita Hill

I hope you don't mind if I insert a slightly discordant note into the David Brock hatefest ["The Real David Brock," April 6]. I certainly share Ramesh Ponnuru's disappointment that Mr. Brock has decided he can no longer associate with us over here in the fever swamps of the right-wing conspiracy. No matter how far Brock may stray, however, I will always be grateful to him for helping to right one of the great wrongs of this decade: the savaging of Clarence Thomas. His own book on Anita Hill and his devastating review of Jane Mayer and Jill Abramson's *Strange Justice* established beyond a reasonable doubt that Anita Hill is a fraud and a liar.

Thanks for fighting the good fight for a good man, David. And good luck with your new friends. You will need it.

Tom Connelly
tconnelly@fsi2000.com

Delicious Blends

Thank you, D. Keith Mano, for the enjoyable discussion of portmanteau phrases ["Laurie's Portmanteau," March 23]. Here are three phrases I have heard and mentally filed which, I think, fit into the category: "He got the short end of the shaft," "Don't cloud the muddied waters," and "Great minds run in the same gutter."

Greg N. Ripps
San Antonio, Tex.

Age of Rediscovery

I was amused, as I often am when reading about the tobacco brouhaha, at Mark Cunningham's review of Jacob Sullum's *For Your Own Good* [March 23]. The anti-tobacco zealots fume over the "discovery" that tobacco is bad for you. Sullum notes that James I and Cotton Mather already knew this.

I would like to quote another authority: "No boy of fourteen can smoke without being affected injuriously. Men are frequently injured by smoking, and boys always." As every schoolboy knows, this was written by Horatio Alger in *Ragged Dick* in the 1860s. When do we discover again that the world is round?

Earnest R. Oney
Winchester, Wash.

Where Have All the Gentlemen Gone?

Reading James Bowman's article on Bill Clinton's troubles ["Don't Ask, Don't Tell," March 23] was quite entertaining. As a Southern gentleman (over forty) in South Carolina—where we still treat women as ladies—I can remember the days when no man would bandy a woman's name in public. I am proud that, at least among my acquaintances, civility is still afforded the ladies of our community. I am also looking forward to the post-feminist age when being a gentleman doesn't mark one as a social misfit. However, I have one thought to add to Mr. Bowman's observations about the scandalmakers. Not only are the feminists and journalists guilty of pushing the politics of "the personal is political" and the "right to know," but feminism has given us a generation of women who glory in their sexual exploits rather than being discreet. Perhaps in the post-feminist world the spectacle of self-aggrandizement will wither as both men and women learn once again how to behave in the public eye.

David Nix
Aiken, S.C.

Oops

The senator from West Virginia who voted to change the Washington airport's name to Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport was Robert Byrd, not Harry Byrd ["Landing Right," March 9]. Harry, from Virginia, left this life long ago. Robert has still much to do before flying away: moving the White House to Wheeling, for example, and the Smithsonian to Charleston.

Karl J. Wilhelm
Ridgewood, N.Y.

I enjoyed John J. Miller's article on Sen. John Ashcroft ["Mr. Clean," March 23] but there is one error I would like to point out. *Missouri is not flat*. Take a peek out the window the next time you are flying over. You might notice the Ozark mountains running through the middle of the state. They are not flat. Keep in mind, we are famous for our hillbillies.

Alex von zur Muehlen
St. Louis, Mo.

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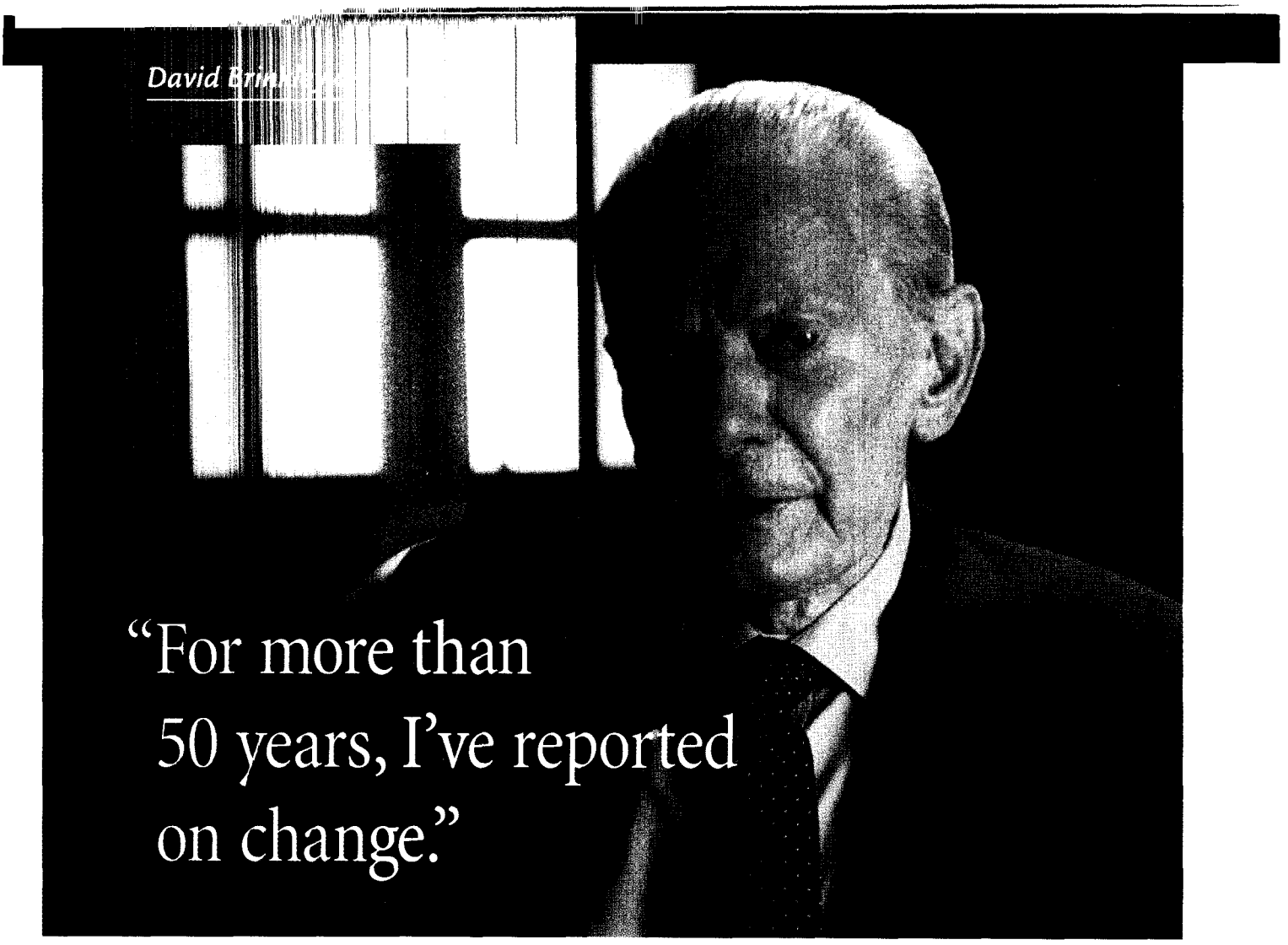

"I've seen world leaders come and go, I've seen governments crumble and borders redrawn, and through it all I've noticed that the only thing that doesn't change is people. We're still all more alike than we are different.

"I've always felt the best way for nations to keep the peace is to supply people with food, not weapons. Back in the 1950s, President Eisenhower said, 'Every gun that is made, every warship launched, every rocket fired signifies...a theft from those who hunger and are not fed.' Eisenhower was a true champion of change.

"Feeding the world is one way to make sure things change for the better."

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FROM THE EDITOR

Clinton by the Book

DOLLY Kyle Browning started writing about her affair with Bill Clinton in 1986. She told friends, "If God intends for this book to be published, He will provide a publisher." Well, He didn't, but Mrs. Browning wrote and self-published *Purposes of the Heart* anyway (credit cards accepted, www.deardolly.com).

The President's taste for lounge singers and stewardesses, for interns and the vulnerable, for women with luxurious bunches of big black hair, has been well remarked. But what about his fatal attraction for aspiring authors?

Not since Harold Ross nurtured all that talent at *The New Yorker* has America seen an inspiration for literary production as prodigious as President Clinton. According to Mrs. Browning, "Billy (then Governor, now President) Clinton encouraged my writing." Then, in 1994, "I told Billy (President) Clinton that I had finished the book. He did not ask me to bury it."

Clinton apparently will suppress billing records, internal White House documents, civil depositions, grand-jury testimony—but not literature!

Mrs. Browning's insistence on "Billy" creates an image of history weirdly bent back upon itself, as if President Carter's brother had made it into the Oval Office. Clinton, indeed, with his soupy apologies abroad and good-old-boy devotion to fun with the ladies, seems a cross between the two Carters—with a sheen of New Class morality on top.

"Billy Beer"? Forget about it. The most forceful denial in Clinton's Paula Jones deposition comes when he is asked if he offered Kathleen Willey an *alcoholic* drink: "Oh, no, no, I don't serve alcohol in the office of the White House."

Did he offer her a cigarette? No, never! Did he grab her breast? Now, that's a more complicated question.

Mrs. Browning promises to be finished with the second book in her planned trilogy by May. Then she will have caught up with Gennifer Flowers, who has already penned *Setting the Record Straight* and *Passion and Betrayal.*

In the latter, Miss Flowers reproduces pictures of a negligee she wore for Clinton ("He liked me to model it for him, but it never stayed on long!") and writes of Clinton at his seductive best. In 1977, the then attorney general seduced Miss Flowers with his eyes, and engaged only in soulful talk the first night she let him into her apartment.

In retrospect, Miss Flowers concludes, "he consciously manipulated me that first night we spent together. He is an expert with women." Presumably, as he gained higher office and there were more and more demands on his time, Clinton remained an expert, but a much less subtle one.

To which Kathleen Willey will attest—apparently also at book length, if given the chance. Just imagine. If Mrs. Willey has a book in her one-minute encounter with Clinton, flight attendant Cristy Zercher, who alleges that Clinton gave her the treatment for a full forty minutes, must have material enough for a Proustian production that will put even Dolly Kyle Browning to shame.

All of this, in its way, serves Clinton's interests. His choice of easily discredited women—struggling nightclub singers and Brentwood interns out for the main chance—takes the sting out of the womanizing charges. *What do you expect from floozies?*

What you expect, of course, is that they would happily take up with a charmer like Bill Clinton—or at least be a ripe target for his attentions. Is it really a point in Clinton's favor that Monica Lewinsky is a hopeless ditz? Or that Kathleen Willey was emotionally unbalanced and in desperate straits?

Ultimately, Clinton's defenders don't really mean to cast the truthfulness of his accusers in doubt; instead, they just want to create a moral stink about them that makes it okay for Clinton to lie and disown them. A woman who would do anything so grubby as write a book or sell her story to a tabloid deserves whatever she gets. So, Clinton gets his way with her—twice.

—RICHARD LOWRY

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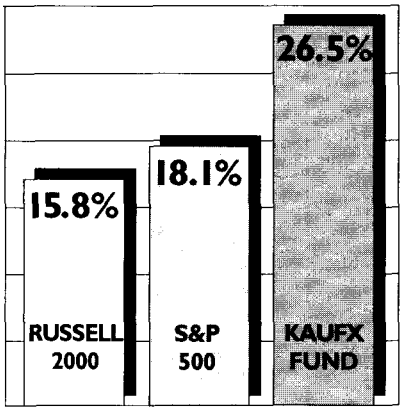

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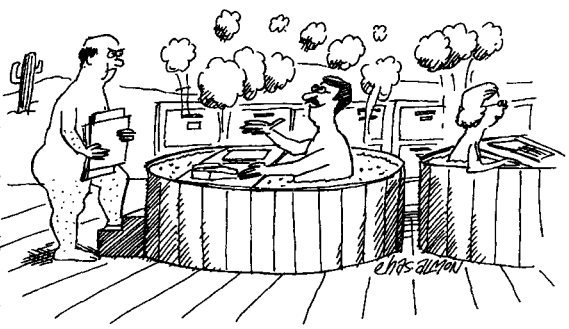
FOR THE RECORD

■ President **Clinton**'s speech to AFL-CIO in Las Vegas interrupted by man yelling: "To hell with **Monica Lewinsky**. Official White House transcript notes only "inaudible interruption." . . . To defuse "longstanding gossip" concerning "a romantic relationship" between President and **Barbra Streisand**, singer not allowed to stay at White House when **Hillary Clinton** is out of town, reports *National Journal*. . . . Sen. **Ben Nighthorse Campbell** (R., Colo.): "There's no question in my mind that there's taxpayers' money that's paying for the private defense for President Clinton's escapades, and that's wrong." . . . One-third of congressional staffers believe impeachment proceedings likely, according to **Frederick/Schneiders** research survey. . . . Clinton biographer **David Marannis** on item cut from his book: "[Clinton] consumed several brownies with hashish and marijuana in them. So that's another way of not inhaling." . . . Academy Awards host **Billy Crystal**: "Just last year, the White House was complaining there was too much sex in Hollywood. How times have changed!"

■ Fox News poll on 2000 presidential race: Texas Gov. **George W. Bush** trounces **Al Gore** 50 to 37 per cent, Gore beats **Dan Quayle** 50 to 30, and Gore bests **Steve Forbes** 45 to 37. But Forbes has gained 8 points since August. . . . New York City Mayor **Rudolph Giuliani** (R.), asked about entering presidential race: "When I ran for mayor, I did not promise I would stay for four years." . . . Gov. **George Voinovich** (R.) wins endorsement from National Education Association, at urging of Ohio chapter, for Senate bid. . . . California governor's salary will increase 26 per cent after November election. . . . Washington State voters may end racial preferences in November. Gov. **Gary Locke** (D.) promises to fight initiative. Seattle-based companies Boeing and Starbucks might join him. . . . Michigan State Rep. **Deborah Whyman** (R.) put initiative repealing racial preferences on ballot.

■ Rep. **Rosa DeLauro** (D., Conn.): "The fact is that Democrats are not for tax cuts." . . . Wait until it's weak? Illinois Secretary of State **George Ryan**, GOP nominee for governor, says: "It would be unconscionable to raise taxes with the economy so strong." . . . Sen. **Daniel Patrick Moynihan** (D., N.Y.): "It's the liberals who can destroy Social Security by preventing any change." . . . House Democrats complain about slow legislative pace, then ask **Newt Gingrich** to delay votes while members tour Africa with Clinton. . . . Like father, like son: Rep. **Jesse Jackson Jr.** (D., Ill.) equates foreign investment in Africa with "African kings and potentates selling other common Africans to shipping companies owned by whites to be sold and exploited as slaves by white masters." . . . **Eleanor Clift**, Beltway cosmopolitan, on the yahoos elected to Congress in 1994: "Many of the freshmen had never traveled outside of the U.S., and they arrived in Washington with a rather provincial world view." . . . Rep. **Christopher Shays** (R., Conn.) says that members supporting transportation bill get $30 to $50 million in funds for their districts, opponents like him get $10 to $15 million. . . . Retiring Rep. **Joe Kennedy** (D., Mass.) keeps $1.5-million campaign account open in case he pursues office again.

■ Minnesota town Northwest Angle (pop. 110), trying to call attention to onerous Canadian fishing regulations that hurt American anglers on Lake of the Woods, asks to join Canada. Rep. **Colin Peterson** (D., Minn.) sponsors constitutional amendment permitting secession. . . . University of Louisville rejects proposal by Sen. **Mitch McConnell** (R., Ky.) to have all students in scholarship program promise not to have children out of wedlock. . . . Vanderbilt University wins $905,000 Pentagon contract to build "robot insects."



The kinder, gentler IRS—West Coast division

■ Institute for Religious Values organizes seventy rabbis who urge override of Clinton's veto of partial-birth-abortion ban. "This historic action represents the first time that a significant part of the American rabbinate has made its voice heard in opposition to a practice which is clearly prohibited by Jewish law," says president **Chris Gersten**. . . . Nation of Islam leader **Louis Farrakhan** appoints convicted assassin of **Malcolm X** to head Harlem mosque. . . . ABC cancels *Nothing Sacred*, called anti-Catholic by critics. . . . Parents Television Council notes 47 per cent increase in family-hour vulgarities since 1995. Disney-owned ABC is worst offender, with 3.47 sexual references per hour. Cleanest network is CBS. . . . DreamWorks movie studio prepares animated Bible epic *Prince of Egypt*, solicits input from **Jerry Falwell** and **Ralph Reed**. Says Falwell: "They have done a great job of making it entertaining yet with the kind of accuracy that is important."

■ Five former East German officers found guilty in Berlin Wall shooting deaths of people trying to flee Communism in 1980s. . . . British Parliament votes to ban corporal punishment in schools. . . . South Africa considers building 140-foot-tall statue of Zulu-nation founder **Shaka** over its largest port, Durban. . . . Facing recruit shortage, British army encourages homeless to enlist and lifts bar on those with minor criminal records. . . . Remains of 86 Japanese officers who died in Soviet prison camps after Second World War will be returned to Japan this summer. . . . Japan forms advisory committee to search for new capital city to replace overcrowded Tokyo.

■ **Will Rogers** said difference between death and taxes is that death doesn't get worse when politicians meet. New threat to old rule: **Jack Kevorkian** attorney **Geoffrey Feiger** is a leading candidate in Michigan to win Democratic nomination to run against Republican Gov. **John Engler**.

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THE WEEK

■ Asked about relations with Rwanda, President Clinton responded: "She's lying. I never laid a hand on her."

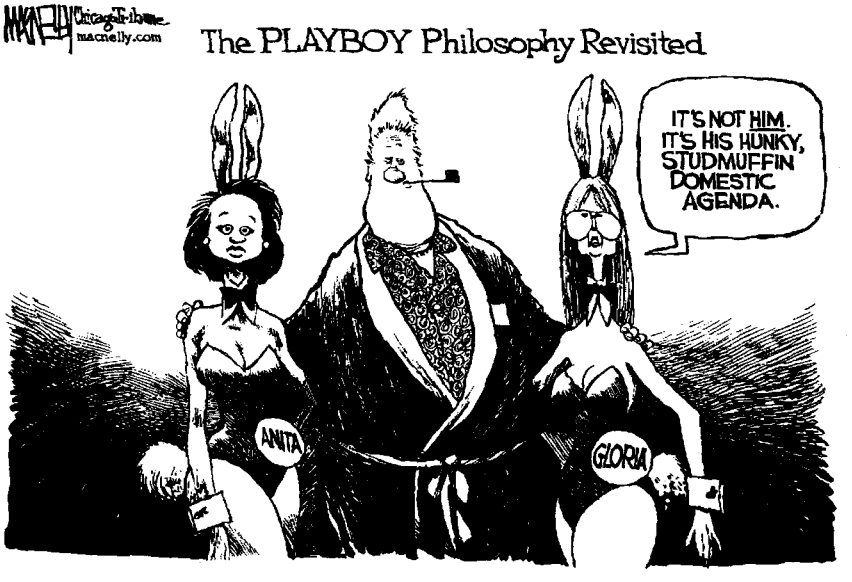
■ In their latest effort to "expand the base" of Republican voters, GOP leaders will now offer the party's weekly radio address in Spanish. We recommend a two-word message: *Aprendan inglés*.

■ Who taxes President Clinton with inconsistency on the subject of apologies? In Africa, he apologized for slavery—"European Americans received the fruits of the slave trade, and we were wrong in that"—and this was consistent with the modern habit of blaming collectivities for the collective sins of long-dead ancestors, especially when the sins are misstated (not all European Americans profited from the slave trade; plenty of African Africans did). In Africa he also apologized for Cold War *Realpolitik*—"The United States . . . dealt with countries in Africa . . . more on how they stood in the struggle between the United States and the Soviet Union than how they stood in the struggle for their own people's aspirations"—and this was consistent with his youthful opposition to the Cold War, as a draft-shy college student and later a McGovernite. Finally, in Africa he uttered not one word of apology for his Leporello's list of conquests, and this was consistent with his silence in North America. Steady as she goes, Mr. President.

■ As much as four years ahead of schedule, the race to succeed Newt Gingrich as Speaker is heating up. Rep. Bob Livingston (R., La.) claims to have about eighty definite GOP votes. Although this number is probably inflated—it is hard to say no to the chairman of the Appropriations Committee, and the election will be by secret ballot—the tantrum-prone Livingston must be considered a serious candidate. Despite his strong conservative voting record, the thought of Speaker Livingston is worrisome. He has come under fire from conservatives for letting the Appropriations Committee run him rather than vice versa. If, as is rumored, Livingston has made a deal with Rep. Jerry Lewis (R., Calif.), in which Livingston would anoint the Bob Michel–style Republican his successor on the committee in return for support from the California delegation, that would add to the chances of the House's returning to business-as-usual. There are better places for Livingston's famed "Cajun Scalpel" than Dick Armey's back.

■ Paula Casey, U.S. Attorney for the District of Arkansas, has reportedly launched an investigation of David Hale, one of Ken Starr's key witnesses in his own investigation of the President. The *Washington Post* reports that Miss Casey has sent FBI agents to interview a woman familiar with Mr. Hale's purported ties to conservative enterprises, including *The American Spectator*. It seems that retired Sen. David Pryor, who heads Mr. Clinton's legal defense fund, brought concerns about Mr. Hale's reliability to Miss Casey's attention. The Independent Counsel Act is intended precisely to remove politically sensitive investigations from presidential appointees like Paula Casey. Her investigation appears to be an attempt to undermine the credibility of a key witness against the President and to provide a rationale for a Justice Department probe of *The American Spectator*. Rather than criminalizing investigative journalism, Miss Casey should forward any legitimate concerns about witness tampering to the Independent Counsel. As the top federal prosecutor in Arkansas, she should not be behaving like Sidney Blumenthal with subpoena power.

■ California has moved to close down cannabis buyers' clubs, which claimed to sell marijuana for medical uses. (The state argued that a lot of the pot was going to partyers rather than cancer patients, but it opposes medical use anyway.) Meanwhile the Clinton Administration's AIDS and drug czars are arguing over needle-exchange programs: do they cut infection rates, or coddle addicts? Both disputes reflect magical thinking: drugs and drug paraphernalia are bad things, which cause bad habits; if we illegalize the things, the habits will disappear. If that doesn't sound like an unreasonable approach to heroin or pot, consider the government's latest magical thoughts about tobacco. The Senate, led by John McCain (R., Ariz.), has agreed to slap a tax of $1.10 on a pack of cigarettes by 2003. Will there be cigarette smuggling, as there already is between the United States and Canada? A black market? Tobacco mobsters? Don't ask the magicians; their hearts are pure.



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■ Fans of the former *NR* feature "Gekko" can once again enjoy John Dizard's news and gossip from Wall Street, every Sunday in the *New York Post* business section. *Post* features are also available on the Web at www.nypostonline.com.

■ After Miss Sidney Abbott told dentist Richard Bragdon that she had HIV, he refused to treat her in his office but offered to fill her cavity in a hospital, where more precautions could be taken. So she sued him for discrimination—and the case is before the Supreme Court. At issue is whether her condition counts as an "impairment that substantially limits one or more of the major life activities" under the Americans with Disabilities Act. Miss Abbott argues that HIV has made her unwilling to have children, to which Dr. Bragdon responds that reproduction is not a major life activity and, besides, the plaintiff is physically capable of childbearing. This last point is stronger than it may sound: we do not prohibit people with HIV or AIDS from having children, or even demand that they inform their lovers about their illness. Why should Miss Abbott's free choice about whether or not to to risk passing her disease to a child impose legal mandates on anyone else? But the main points here are that the ADA yields ever more perverse results, and that, in today's America, litigation is a major life activity.

■ The National Academy of Sciences must have a learning disability. It has only now figured out how children learn to read. Its new report (*Preventing Reading Difficulties in Young Children*) adds little to the 1967 insights of Harvard reading expert Jeanne Chall: not all children learn to read in the same way, but, for most, the surest method of instruction combines systematic phonics with lots of practice in understanding the meaning of words and plenty of stories worth reading. Still, phonics advocates no longer need see themselves as a persecuted sect (except in colleges of education, where most future teachers are still instructed by "whole language" zealots). But they shouldn't get carried away. Properly done, explicit phonics fades away by the end of the first grade, like the training wheels on a child's first bicycle. The crucial thing thereafter is to do a lot of reading. Here the whole-language people have a point: "See Spot run" isn't worth waking up for. Even seven-year-olds deserve real literature. Maybe the country can now turn to its most acute reading problems: the tens of thousands of primary-school teachers who lack *any* proven methods for teaching reading, and the tens of millions of parents who would rather turn on the television than pick up a book.

■ Come one! Come all! The Mason & Maddox Bawling Brawley Circus is in town! See the amazing pseudo-lawyers, C. Vernon Mason and Alton Maddox Jr., throw tantrums and stage walkouts while pretending to defend themselves against libel charges! See the Man with the Head of Stone, Judge S. Barrett Hickman, tolerate their antics until his courtroom becomes a bear garden! See the Vanishing Reverend, Al Sharpton, who was in the Brawley business up to his hips ten years ago, but makes himself scarce now that he wants to be a second Jesse Jackson! See the Rape That Wasn't, the hoax that Tawana Brawley perpetrated (so a 1988 grand jury ruled), now the article of faith for millions—well, thousands—well, dozens—of black radical layabouts with nothing better to do! See, alas, Steven Pagones, the innocent former prosecutor, accused by Sharpton, Mason, and Maddox of being one of Miss Brawley's assailants, vainly try to retrieve some justice out of this demented farce.

■ A confidential memo by the head of Washington mayor Marion Barry's police security detail, Lt. Ricky Mitchell, complains of the mayor's frequent "unscheduled stops" at locations throughout the D.C. area, where he has refused to allow his security detail to accompany him. These excursions sometimes last several hours, and on one occasion when the officers tried to check on the mayor's safety, he came angrily to the door "partially clothed." The memo complains, courageously, that this behavior makes it difficult to ensure the mayor's protection and raises "the appearance of unethical or immoral conduct." Is Barry running for President?

■ When Boris Yeltsin sacked his entire cabinet on March 23, his decision was regarded (by *The Economist*, for example) as "incomprehensible." One Moscow newspaper called it a "brain bypass," an unkind allusion to Yeltsin's 1996 heart surgery. But there may be method in the madness. Former prime minister Viktor Chernomyrdin, Yeltsin's loyal lapdog for five years, was showing presidential ambitions and preening as Yeltsin's successor—notwithstanding that Yeltsin still has three years remaining on his present term. The new prime minister, Sergei Kiriyenko, is a young reformer who promises policy continuity but poses no political threat. The foreign and defense ministers, as expected, were quickly reappointed, assuring—alas—continuity there as well. Yeltsin may have miscalculated in one respect, however. With Chernomyrdin weakened as a candidate (though still running), it is truly an open field for the presidential election in 2000. That gives other formidable contenders, especially the nationalist Moscow mayor Yuri Luzhkov and the charismatic Gen. Aleksandr Lebed, a boost. And that is not good news.

■ Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty, which broadcast the truth into Communist Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union throughout the Cold War, have adapted shrewdly and successfully to our foreign policy's post–Cold War needs. Where democrats still struggle with oligarchs over freedom of the media (as in, sad to say, Russia and much of Eastern Europe), or where the struggle for basic freedom is only beginning (as in Iran and Iraq), the radios still have an essential mission. The headquarters' relocation from expensive Munich to Prague in 1995 has cut costs from $220 million to $68 million; at the same time, staff was cut from 1,600 down to 370. Not

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anticipating all this, Congress in 1994 decreed that RFE/RL would lose all official U.S. funding by the end of 1999. Many legislators now see this as unwise, and a provision in the State Department authorization bill would reopen the question of post-1999 funding. If the State Department authorization fails because of other, unrelated issues, another vehicle should be found to save these small but vital engines of democracy.

■ The Jonesboro funerals had not even been held before cries went up for yet more gun-control laws, as if this chillingly premeditated, elaborate, and weakly motivated murder conspiracy had transpired through some caesura in the statute books. Media experts mostly agreed: the Jonesboro tragedy was caused by some combination of adolescent hormones and ready access to powerful weapons. This cannot be right, for these have been constants for a very long time. Adolescents and their hormones have been with us always. Nor are hunting rifles, the murder weapons in this instance, more readily available today than in the past two centuries. Guns have been a part of the culture of northern Arkansas since it was settled. In fact, in most counties in the United States, hunting rifles are as unremarkable as toasters, dogs, or microwave ovens. Yet incidents of this kind—mass-murders of schoolchildren by schoolchildren—never occurred before last October. That massacre, in Pearl, Mississippi, was followed in December by one in Paducah, Kentucky, and now by Jonesboro. The variable is not the kids and not the guns, but the culture. Unfortunately, that is not so easily remedied by law.

■ Efren Saldivar, a respiratory-care therapist in Glendale, California, told a cop that he had killed forty to fifty patients over the last nine years. Saldivar said he killed only those who were unconscious, had do-not-resuscitate orders, and looked "ready to die." Glendale police are trying to decide how to proceed. "Just because somebody confessed doesn't mean you can charge him," said one. Has the President been giving epistemology lectures to cops?

■ In Oregon a cancer patient in her eighties became the first citizen to take advantage of the state's new assisted-suicide law. State health officials said they will make a preliminary report on assisted suicides when they have reached the nice round number of ten. No sense rushing into these things.

■ As an ordained minister and a future NFL Hall-of-Famer, Reggie White is exactly the sort of celebrity whom politicians want to befriend. No surprise, then, that the Wisconsin legislature invited the Green Bay Packer defensive lineman to speak. But the event turned sour when White explained that each ethnic group has its own gifts, and that when society brings the assorted cultures together, they form "a complete image of God." White incautiously identified the assets of each of these groups: Whites are good with money, blacks sing and dance well, Asians are high-tech whizzes, Indians are super-spiritual, and Hispanics know family values ("a Hispanic person . . . can put twenty or thirty people in one home"). The assembled politicos were stunned. "Every group seems to have been attacked," complained Rep. Robert Turner (D., Milwaukee). But the outrage is difficult to fathom. White didn't intend to impugn any race, and since the governing principle of multiculturalism is that Americans are not one people but a compilation of many distinct cultures, what is the harm in noting those differences in a complimentary manner? It didn't help that White called homosexuality "one of the biggest sins" in the Bible. And so even though the pro sports world routinely pardons the transgressions of wife-beaters, sexual predators, drug-abusers, and coach-stranglers, White will not get off so easily.

■ Bella Abzug, congresswoman, feminist, lefty, and scold, has died at the age of 77. Representing the Upper West Side of Manhattan, she was a lifelong fellow-traveler. Her lurch onto the bandwagon of women's lib showed early on what a radical movement that would be. Her defeat by Daniel Patrick Moynihan in the 1976 senatorial primary was a rare moment of sanity in the modern Democratic Party. Stylistically, she was grotesque, an affront. Woody Allen gave her a cameo in *Manhattan*. She will not be missed.

■ Finally, the White House gets to read stories about a Clinton trip with one "p."

■ No avowed homosexuals or atheists allowed in the Boy Scouts? Well, there's always the military.

Once More, with Feeling

Executive privilege, thought to have died
When President Nixon played Jekyll, then Hyde,
Returns to the White House, updated as farce,
A form Mr. Clinton's been vetted to parse,
While bumps interspersed with traditional grinds
Enliven the skits as the program unwinds.

—W. H. von Dreele

Starr to Gingrich to Hyde

THE Clinton Administration has claimed executive privilege for virtually everyone who is privileged to know the Executive. Shaky as this claim is (see below), it functions as a Get Out of Jail Free card, buying

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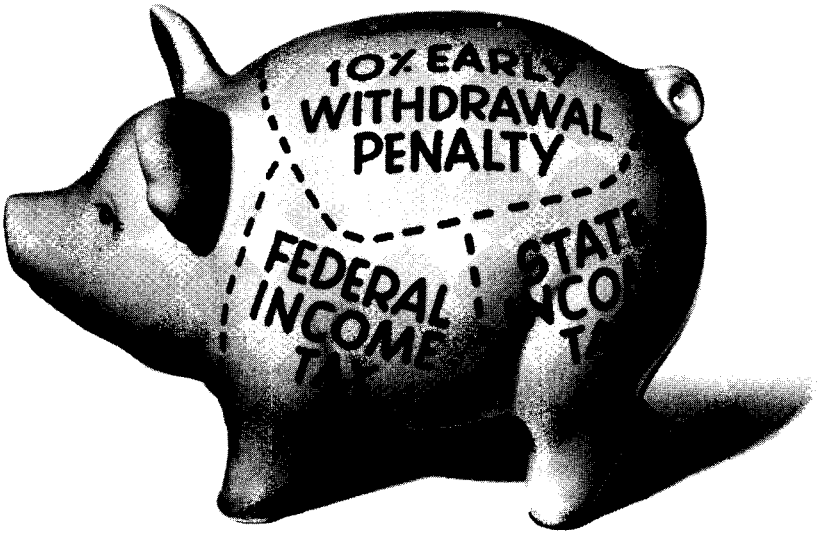

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Mr. Clinton more rolls of the dice, and perhaps eight or nine months, until the Supreme Court rules.

Nothing is likely to happen until after November's election, which suits the President, and which also suits the GOP, since Mr. Clinton's continuing popularity suggests the perils of any premature attempts to take him on. But the stasis cannot last indefinitely.

Under the Independent Counsel statute, Kenneth Starr must submit to Congress a report on his investigation of the President. He might exonerate Mr. Clinton; he might offer evidence of serious offenses, such as obstruction of justice, with no conclusions drawn; or he might provide "substantial and credible information" constituting grounds for impeachment.

An impeachment begins when the House adopts a resolution calling for an investigation—traditionally by the Judiciary Committee—of relevant charges. Criminal offenses are not the only grounds for impeachment. In 1974, the Judiciary Committee concluded that President Nixon could be impeached not only for violating federal criminal statutes, but also for abusing the power of his office and for refusing to comply with committee subpoenas. But Congress has also declined to consider as impeachable offenses which took place before the official's term of office: e.g., Vice President Schuyler Colfax (1869–73) was not impeached for shady dealings he engaged in while he was a congressman, nor was Vice President Agnew impeached for influence-peddling in Maryland.

So much for past history. The history of any impeachment now will be written, in part, by politics. The GOP's disappointing track record in congressional investigations—consider Al D'Amato's debacle in the Senate Banking Committee—prompted Speaker Newt Gingrich to seek some alternative to the 35-member Judiciary Committee. But there was no satisfactory alternative to the traditional venue. Judiciary Committee Chairman Henry Hyde—sober and respected—would be the GOP's chief asset in any inquiry. If Hyde had presided over a smaller task force of House members selected by the Speaker, the inquiry would have appeared to have been fixed by Gingrich, and would have become a lightning rod for both Democrats and GOP Judiciary Committee members who had not been invited to the party.

So the mission will be Hyde's. If Starr's report is damning, it will be the hardest job Hyde has taken on in a long and fearless career. Judiciary includes some of the most partisan and bilious liberals in the House: John Conyers (Mich.), Maxine Waters (Calif.), and Barney Frank (Mass.), the brother of White House flack Ann Lewis. GOP committee members must pledge Hyde their full attention and cooperation. Someone has to do his duty in Clinton's Washington.

Pride and Privilege

PRESIDENT Clinton has asserted executive privilege to prevent his wife and certain top aides—including conspiracy theorist Sidney Blumenthal and crony *cum* counsel Bruce Lindsey—from answering questions before a federal grand jury about their possible roles in obstruction of justice.

In *U.S.* v. *Nixon*, the Supreme Court ordered President Nixon to release his Oval Office tapes to prosecutors. In its 8 to 0 decision, the Court concluded that when balancing the interests of justice against presidential claims of executive privilege, justice must prevail except in the most extraordinary circumstances. As the Court put it, "Although the courts will afford the utmost deference to presidential acts in the performance of an Article II function," a claim of privilege based on "a generalized interest in confidentiality," and not on protecting diplomatic or military secrets, "must yield."

Executive privilege, therefore, is a very narrow privilege. It certainly cannot be used simply to keep potentially embarrassing, improper, or incriminating information from congressional or criminal investigators. Mr. Clinton's claims of privilege apparently concern conversations between the First Lady and Mr. Blumenthal, as well as conversations between the President and Mr. Lindsey involving Monica Lewinsky, among other matters. In other words, they are precisely the kinds of claims based on a "generalized interest in confidentiality" that the Supreme Court rejected in *Nixon*.

White House apologists argue that *Nixon* establishes that executive privilege yields only after a grand jury has found probable cause to believe that the President has broken laws. But *Nixon* itself makes no such distinction—nor, logically, could it. This argument would create a Catch-22 for investigators: they cannot have access to evidence unless a trial is pending, but the President can use claims of executive privilege to undermine a grand-jury investigation and thus prevent any trial.

Clinton has another option, provided not by judicial precedent but by the Constitution. All federal prosecutors, including Independent Counsel Starr, ultimately work for the President. Mr. Clinton could therefore tell his White House staff not to appear before the grand jury,

Catatonic Republicans

The GOP, transfixed by polls
So high the chandeliers
Clink in applause with girandoles
Whenever Clinton nears,
Seems on the point of making scenes,
Like Guelphs assaulting Ghibellines,
But then they sweat and hold their spleens.

—W. H. von Dreele

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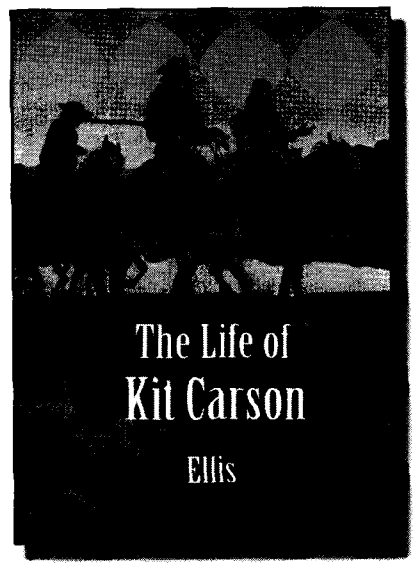

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or fire (or order Janet Reno to fire) Starr. Instead, Clinton is asserting executive privilege against himself.

When President Nixon made a similar desperate resort to executive privilege, the House Judiciary Committee concluded in its articles of impeachment that, "using the powers of his high office," Nixon had attempted "to delay, impede, and obstruct investigations."

Aborting Compromise

THE pro-life cause continues to make advances in the culture, the polity, and the debate—everywhere except the courts. The latest example: the Supreme Court, over the objections of Justices Rehnquist, Scalia, and Thomas, refused to hear Ohio's appeal of a Sixth Circuit decision striking down its ban on partial-birth abortions. The Sixth Circuit adduced three reasons for its action. 1) The law was designed to prohibit those abortions where the fetus is partially delivered, the base of its skull ruptured with scissors, and the "intracranial contents" (the court's term for "brains") vacuumed out. But it could, if stretched far, be interpreted also to ban those abortions where the whole fetus, including the brain, is dismembered and then vacuumed out. This is too vague, and because it would outlaw a lot of abortions it constitutes an "undue burden" on the Court-mandated right to abortion. 2) The law did not give abortionists clear guidelines in determining which fetuses were "viable" and thus worthy of protection and which were "non-viable" and thus could be killed with impunity. 3) The law did not include exceptions for "mental and emotional" health as required by *Doe* v. *Bolton* (1973). (The Sixth Circuit did not address the contradiction between objections 2 and 3—abortionists have too much leeway and not enough.) Finally, the Sixth Circuit carved out for abortion law an exception to normal constitutional procedure. Usually when a court finds that a law yields unconstitutional results in some discrete subset of cases, it carves out an exception to that law. Under the Sixth Circuit's standard, when abortion is at issue, the entire law must be struck down.

If the courts generally follow the Sixth Circuit's lead, it will transpire that the Supreme Court's 1992 *Casey* decision did not, as advertised, give the states much more freedom to regulate abortion than they had under *Roe* v. *Wade* (1973). The only permissible regulations will turn out to be those which affect few abortions and contain huge, subjectively defined loopholes. In effectively guaranteeing a right to partial-birth abortion, the courts will simply be consolidating their entire post-*Roe* line of abortion edicts. It is often said that the middle ground of abortion politics is "pro-choice with restrictions"—or, less conventionally but more accurately, "pro-life with exceptions." Decisions like the Sixth Circuit's would slam shut the door on any such position. The only alternative to abortion-on-demand would be a full-scale assault on *Roe* and its progeny. The pro-abortionists call their opponents extremists even as they systematically destroy any possibility of compromise.

Highway to Hell

WHAT is it about highway bills that causes Republicans to lapse into a state of fiscal insanity? The last go-round we heard President George Bush trumpeting his $150-billion roads bill as "jobs, jobs, jobs." This year the House Transportation Committee has drafted a $214-billion, six-year highway bill, the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (Ice Tea, as it is known on the Hill), that is the most expensive public-works undertaking in American history. Democrats couldn't have written a worse bill. ISTEA hikes highway, road, and bridge funding by nearly 35 per cent in this era of "fiscal restraint." It bulldozes the 1997 budget deal by spending $30 billion in extra tax dollars with no offsetting savings. It contains an estimated 1,467 white-elephant "demonstration" projects, which will cost an estimated $9 billion.

The bill leaves intact odious mandates, including the Depression-era Davis–Bacon Act, which requires union wages to be paid on all federal construction projects. It also retains the minority set-aside program—i.e., quotas. Together these social-policy mandates inflate highway construction costs by an estimated 30 per cent.

This year's transportation bill creates a $41-billion urban-transit slush fund for the nation's mayors. Over the past thirty years Uncle Sam has poured more than $100 billion into urban transit systems, and they have fewer riders today than before Lyndon Johnson first turned on the spending spigot. Some "investment."

In the Senate, ISTEA was opposed by exactly four members—the two senators each from Wisconsin and Pennsylvania. And their primary complaint was that their states got too few slabs of bacon. Not a single member of the United States Senate—not even one—voted "nay"

On Safari

Unlike Livingstone, who went
Missing, Mr. Clinton's tent
Always signaled where he was.
Though the staff and local fuzz
Tried to lose the pushy press,
There was some unpleasantness
When a few broke through to ask
If he's planning to unmask.

—W. H. VON DREELE

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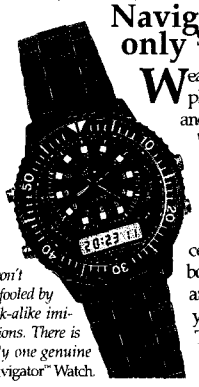

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•*Consider the MR-307A as a corporate gift. We can silkscreen your logo on quantities of 100*

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simply on the basis that this bloated bill is contrary to everything that Republicans say they stand for. In the House, Budget Committee Chairman John Kasich and a handful of others are waging a lonely fight.

What makes all this farcical is that America no longer needs a federal highway program, or a 60,000-employee U.S. Department of Transportation, for that matter. The federal highway system was completed nearly twenty years ago. Now gas-tax dollars are used to pass out pork and meddle in states' affairs (remember the 55-mile-per-hour speed limit?). The gas tax should be repealed and this program turned back to the states.

The primary purpose of the 1998 ISTEA is not to improve the nation's infrastructure, but to hand out million-dollar presents to every transportation lobbyist in Washington. Arguably, it is the worst highway bill in American history. It should be the last.

Give Me Your Democrats

WRITING in *The New Republic*, Peter Schuck reports that in 1996 the United States admitted 916,000 legal immigrants—the largest cohort since 1914. That same year a Republican Congress refused to reduce immigration quotas and helped legalize more than 400,000 illegal aliens (whose numbers, Mr. Schuck adds, grow by a quarter of a million a year). Yet as Mr. Schuck makes clear, these decisions ran contrary to the GOP's political interests. "Their presence makes bilingual education a major curricular and fiscal battleground and sharpens the affirmative-action debate as newcomers who never suffered discrimination in the U.S. compete for preferences." Immigration probably accounts, he reflects, for a significant share of the gap between high- and low-skill workers. The General Accounting Office calculates that taxpayers bear significant costs because U.S.-born children of illegal aliens are automatic citizens entitled to welfare benefits. And these political trends continue unabated even though, as Mr. Schuck concedes, most Americans and most immigrants "want to admit fewer immigrants, oppose illegal immigration, and don't want immigrants to receive bilingual education, affirmative action, or welfare."

None of these facts is in itself surprising. All have been reported in recent years in major reports such as those published by the Rand Corporation and the National Academy of Sciences. What is surprising—and greatly to Mr. Schuck's credit—is that they appear in an article which favors continuing high levels of immigration and which argues that such levels are politically secure, largely because the Republican Party has abandoned any reform that would cut immigration. Mr. Schuck's article thus confirms the paradox pointed out last year by *NR*: the intellectual argument for lower immigration has been won but the political argument for current immigration policy has also been won.

This is plainly an unstable situation. Hence immigration enthusiasts now attempt to shore up their political victory by retaking some intellectual ground. Two recent studies—a survey of new immigrants and a study of the children of immigrants in San Diego and southern Florida—suggest that immigrants outperform native Americans at school and at work. This contradicts most of the earlier research, on which Mr. Schuck was relying, and there are problems with both new studies. The survey of recent immigrants oversamples by 350 per cent immigrants whose admittance to this country was based on employment rather than family reunification. Yet these are the very immigrants who were brought into the U.S. by employers because they have superior skills. Similarly, the survey of the children of immigrants shows that, while the children of Chinese, Indian, Japanese, and Korean parents had very high grade-point averages, children of Latin American and Haitian backgrounds performed poorly, with averages around C. Since the survey was concentrated in immigration-fed Hispanic enclaves in Florida and California, this suggests that these students may be held back by the ease in which they can continue to live in a Spanish-speaking world. Moreover, the study also finds that when children assimilate, most assimilate to a "national" or ethnic identity that is hostile to the United States and to an American identity—as Scott McConnell documented recently in *NR* (Dec. 31). And these children were more likely to drop out of school, thus swelling an alienated underclass.

The common-sense conclusion to draw from these studies is that we should reduce total immigrant numbers (to discourage the rise of linguistic enclaves), ensure that within the reduced total more immigrants have high skills and speak English, and reform our assimilative mechanisms to produce Americans rather than anti-Americans. None of this is currently being considered. Indeed, the current Republican approach is to purchase an increase in skilled immigration by promising ethnic pressure groups an increase in other categories too, thereby adding disproportionately to the social costs of immigration. Our children—and the children of immigrants already here—will pay the price. And so, in lost elections, will the GOP.

Bob Santamaria, R I P

MALCOLM Muggeridge wrote that Bob Santamaria was the only person he had ever known who was "up to his neck in politics and has never sought any advantage for himself from it." That of course was his strength, what made him arguably the most influential man ever in Australian politics. It helps explain why the son of an Italian fruit vendor would be accorded a state funeral by the prime minister of a party he had always opposed, attended by another former prime minister, a lord mayor, a sitting premier, a cardinal,

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14 bishops, 170 priests, and almost as many children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren.

Over the course of his eight decades, the five-foot-six-inch "Santa" devoted his life and considerable organizational skills to what he saw as a series of lost causes: an honest Australian labor movement, orthodoxy in the Roman Catholic Church, Australian-rules football. But though Santa rarely prevailed, his presence invariably prevented his enemies from doing so. It is thus fitting that he will be remembered most for a negative: a fight against Communist influence in the Australian trade-union movement that would split the Labor Party in the 1950s and keep it out of office for almost two decades. Few men go to their Maker with a better credential.

Over the years Santa's organizations changed often, but never his principles. In the twilight of his life, with the Cold War won, he returned to the anti-market Arcadian railings of his *Catholic Worker* days. Australia, the world, and even Rome had moved, but Santa had remained whence he started: fixed, faithful, and certain. Yet there was always something of the George Bailey about him, not least in the riotous spaghetti dinners the 82-year-old cooked each Sunday for whichever of his 8 children, 34 grandchildren, and 5 great-grandchildren cared to attend. Not infrequently, all of them did. They smiled during the eulogy when Archbishop George Pell recounted how, when someone came to Santa with the idea of organizing a seminar on "Signs of Hope," he replied that there weren't any. Of course, in looking for signs we had one advantage he never did: We could always see Santa.

—William McGurn

Notes & Asides

■ Dear Mr. Buckley:

Mr. Bruce Allerdice's celebration ("Notes & Asides," April 6) of the vindication of your statement that Prince Charles is "the descendant of Henry VIII" is, I'm afraid, somewhat premature. He offers as fact a speculative theory by Anthony Hoskins in the March 1997 *Genealogist* magazine ("Mary Boleyn's Carey Children: Offspring of King Henry VIII?").

If the question mark in the title of the article isn't sufficient to disclose its speculative nature, the author's conclusion leaves no room for doubt. Here is what he says: "Although proof at this stage is not conclusive the circumstantial evidence indicates a high degree of probability that Henry VIII was the father of Catherine and Henry Carey."

Respectfully,
Kalman I. Nulman
New York, N.Y.

Dear Mr. Nulman: That is the most robust affirmation by a genealogist in the history of declarative prose. My only problem with it is that it's just a little . . . apodictic in formulation? Cordially, WFB

■ Dear Mr. Buckley:

In "Notes & Asides" for February 9, you entertained etymological speculations on the origin of the word "parable," as in the parables of Our Lord. May I contribute a bit of hasty research? The Liddell and Scott Greek–English lexicon lists the first meaning of *parabolē* as "juxtaposition, comparison" and cites two *loci* from Plato's dialogue *Philebus*. The -bol- part comes from the root meaning "throw"—seen also in "symbol"—and the para- from "side" or "alongside," as in "parallel." So a parable is a story that "throws" one meaning alongside another, or develops parallel meanings: the literal and the figurative. Each point on the literal line corresponds to a point on the figurative line. The mathematical meaning, corrupted into English as "parabola," the definition of which is beyond my ken, apparently derives from Pythagoras through the neo-Platonic philosopher Proclus. In any event, the meaning of "analogy" would have been well established in Koine Greek. Mr. Mason's lovely but fanciful concentrating concave mirror is, alas, unnecessary, but edifying as to the effect of the stories nonetheless.

Cordially,
Arthur Glass
Hillside, N.J.

Dear Mr. Buckley:

John S. Mason Jr. is both right and wrong about the word *parable*. He is right, of course, about the etymon: Greek παραβολή. Nevertheless, he is wrong in his suggestion that the King James translators "invented" the word in English. As the enclosed photocopied page of the *Middle English Dictionary* (of which I am a former editor) indicates, the word was used in English as early as 1250, already with its common meaning of "example" or "quasi-allegorical narrative illustration." In fact, the word does not occur at all in Middle English in its mathematical sense. The medieval translations of the Bible are from the Vulgate, which regularly uses *parabola* where the Greek παραβολή occurs. So Latin had the word from Greek before St. Jerome; the word was available to literate Englishmen through the Vulgate, and had been around so long that it was the normal word for the King James translators to choose. It was not even unusual. Adding the extra meaning—that a parable concentrates light on a subject—is good patristic-style exegesis, though Mr. Mason is right when he doubts that this meaning was intended by the seventeenth-century scholars. All good preachers commit the etymological fallacy, including me (I'm a deacon in the Catholic Diocese of Austin). Cheers.

Yours sincerely,
Roy Barkley
Pflugerville, Tex.

Dear Mr. Barkley: You are certainly a learned deacon, and I return your cheers with enthusiasm. —WFB

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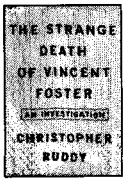

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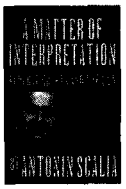

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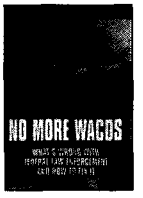

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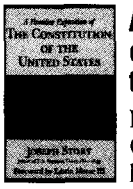

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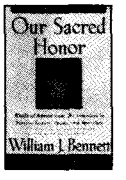

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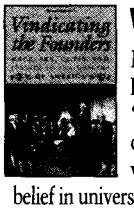

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SCANDAL FILE

MSNBC, for the Defense

BYRON YORK

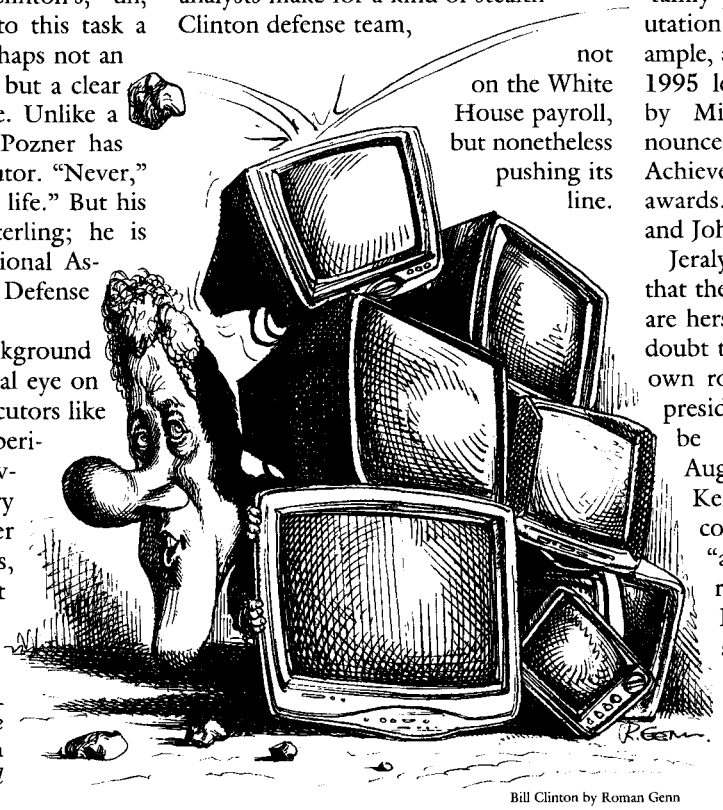
LARRY Pozner doesn't have any illusions about his credentials as a pundit. "I'm a certified lightweight," says the Denver-based criminal-defense lawyer and talking head for NBC, MSNBC, and CNBC. Until the last few years, Mr. Pozner concerned himself with defending little guys in trouble with the law. But now he has risen to at least minor TV prominence on a wave of high-profile criminal cases with a Colorado connection: the trial in Denver of Timothy McVeigh and fellow conspirator Terry Nichols, and the still-unsolved murder in Boulder of child beauty queen JonBenet Ramsey.

Since January, Pozner has spent a fair amount of his time offering legal analysis of the Monica Lewinsky scandal (although an MSNBC executive says the network is careful not to use the S-word to describe President Clinton's, uh, problem). Pozner brings to this task a certain point of view—perhaps not an outright pro-Clinton bias, but a clear anti-prosecutor perspective. Unlike a lot of defense attorneys, Pozner has no experience as a prosecutor. "Never," he says. "Not a day in my life." But his defense credentials are sterling; he is president-elect of the National Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers.

Pozner says his background leads him to cast a skeptical eye on the power of federal prosecutors like Kenneth Starr. "My experience in life is that the government can be a very frightening animal," Pozner says. "A prosecutor says, 'Well, Starr has the right to subpoena anybody he wants,' and I say as a defense lawyer, 'Yeah, but should he? Do we have to beat up on [Monica Lewinsky's] mother?'"

MSNBC, which has been in business only since mid 1996, has become the clear leader in coverage of the Clinton scandal. The subject consumes hours each day, and one nightly program, *The White House in Crisis*, is devoted entirely to it. By contrast, CNN seems only mildly interested in the scandal, and Fox News Channel doesn't always have its act together.

MSNBC's prime-time shows feature the usual Washington A-list guests: Howard Fineman and Michael Isikoff of *Newsweek*, David Maraniss and E. J. Dionne of the *Washington Post*, Dee Dee Myers and Mary Matalin of the Clinton and Bush camps, respectively. But the biases of Pozner and his fellow legal analysts are less well known. These analysts make for a kind of stealth Clinton defense team, not on the White House payroll, but nonetheless pushing its line.



Bill Clinton by Roman Genn

Take Jeralyn Merritt, another Denver defense lawyer and MSNBC analyst who got her start in TV during the Oklahoma City bombing trial. It was a case that she found completely absorbing; after doing some commentary for CNBC's *Rivera Live*, she changed hats and actually joined the Timothy McVeigh defense team. Since the trial ended, she has spent a lot of time commenting on talk-TV staples like the Ramsey case, the nanny trial, and, of course, Clinton/Lewinsky.

Miss Merritt says she tries to be scrupulously fair when she appears by herself as a legal analyst. But when she is paired with a prosecutor, she sees her role as defense advocate. "I think it's my duty as a criminal-defense lawyer to bring out the defense perspective and educate the public as to what criminal defense is about," she says. "When the Federal Government decides to bring all of its resources to bear against you, it is an awesome task to fight that . . . Ken Starr has an unlimited budget."

Like Larry Pozner, Jeralyn Merritt is active in the National Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers; she serves on the organization's board of directors and for the last four years has co-chaired its legislative committee. The group has a widespread reputation for being aggressively liberal. There's certainly plenty of evidence that the reputation is deserved. To take just one example, a brochure from the Association's 1995 legislative convention, organized by Miss Merritt, includes the announcement of the group's Lifetime Achievement and Champion of Justice awards. The recipients? Ramsey Clark and John Conyers, respectively.

Jeralyn Merritt is quick to point out that the opinions she gives on television are hers and hers alone. But there is no doubt that the Association is playing its own role in the Clinton case. Current president Gerald Lefcourt—who will be succeeded by Mr. Pozner in August—has all but declared war on Kenneth Starr. The independent counsel, Mr. Lefcourt says, is an "attack dog." The law, he said recently on CNN, "has allowed Ken Starr to roam wild for years spending now almost $40 million to try to get the President." On CNBC's *Rivera Live* program in early February, Lefcourt said, "If I was Clinton's attorney, I might think about going into

Mr. York is an investigative writer with The American Spectator. *He has appeared on MSNBC.*

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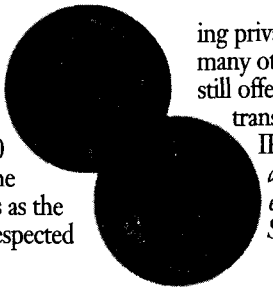

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court and seeking the removal of Ken Starr."

The third MSNBC legal analyst is Robert Tarver Jr., yet another defense lawyer. Tarver began his career as a public defender in Hudson County, New Jersey. He took a turn as a county prosecutor—getting high marks for an impressive conviction rate—and then returned to defense work. He is now in charge of the public defender's office in Ocean County.

According to a recent profile of Mr. Tarver in the *Asbury Park Press*, his heart is in defense work. "There is something very intriguing about defense work," he told the paper. "There is nothing in the world like having a client sitting next to you, relying on you." Tarver also takes time to engage in community activism; in February he appeared at a "Rebellious Lawyering" conference at Yale, a gathering designed, according to a press release, to "rally activists against poverty and injustice."

TARVER, Pozner, and Merritt have made their careers defending drug suspects, murder suspects, white-collar-crime suspects, suspects who need public defenders. Their concern for the rights of the accused is admirable, but it seems self-evident that the White House scandal is different from your basic kid-with-a-bag-of-crack case. Bill Clinton has a huge team of first-rate private lawyers, plus forty, or maybe eighty, White House lawyers, plus the entire power of the Executive Branch—including the power to fire prosecutor Starr. Is it really accurate to engage in the defense attorney's classic strategy of characterizing him as the underdog?

Pozner admits the White House case is quite unlike the situations he normally faces. "I haven't had any Presidents as clients," he says. But Bob Epstein, executive producer for daytime programs at MSNBC, defends the analysts. "They come to it with a defense-lawyer point of view," Epstein says, but the network has "tried consistently to book people who are both pro-prosecution and pro-defense." He points to a number of ex-

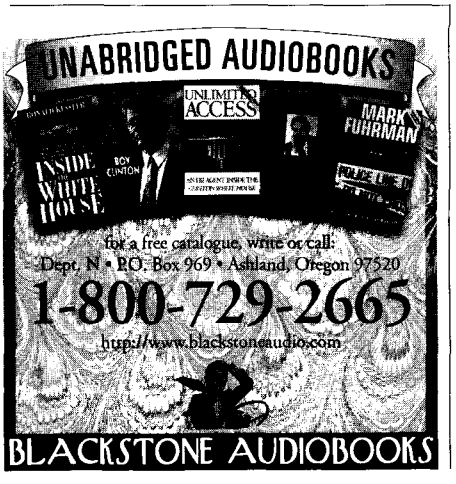
While plenty of working defense lawyers are available to appear on television, no working prosecutor could double as a network pundit.

prosecutors who appear on the network, including Wendy Murphy, Joseph DiGenova, and Victoria Toensing. These occasional guests, however, play less prominent roles than staff analysts Merritt, Pozner, and Tarver.

In one sense, this is not MSNBC's fault. While plenty of working defense lawyers are available to appear on television, no working prosecutor could double as a network pundit. Still, MSNBC could search out more prosecutorially oriented lawyers. And it appears that that is what the network is now doing. It is engaged in talks with DiGenova and Toensing, both of whom were Justice Department prosecutors in the Reagan Administration, about their joining MSNBC as legal analysts. Their presence—or that of some other similarly disposed former prosecutor—would balance the pro-defense stance of the current lineup.

Whatever happens in this regard, the talk will go on—and on. MSNBC's ratings are one of the few scientific polls that show people are indeed interested in the Clinton scandal. According to a network spokesman, ratings are up across the board. For example, the late-afternoon *NewsChat* program, which devotes an enormous amount of time to Clinton punditry, reached an average of 67,000 households in December 1997, before the scandal—and 151,000 in February 1998. Other programs report gains nearly as large.

But it remains an open question whether the booming commentary business will become a financial bonanza for the defense-lawyer pundits. Pozner says he is now recognized in public—it's flattering, he says—but there are no new clients lining up at the door. "Who's gonna call me?" Pozner asks. "The next President?" □



Primarily Mush

RICHARD BROOKHISER

IF synergy is the key to marketing, what better time to release *Primary Colors*—the movie based on the book based on the life and downtimes of Bill Clinton in early 1992—than during the scandals of early 1998? Bill Clinton survived the bimbo eruptions then; can a movie about them be a guide to the perplexed now? Its makers think so, for they are plugging their handiwork as a purgative for American naïveté. "Historically," says Joe Klein, the book's author, "having an interesting sex life is a leading indicator of success in the Presidency." Director Mike Nichols goes further: "The very gift that makes . . . a great leader is the same thing that keeps him jumping on a lot of women."

Don't bother to look for counter-examples, for the movie's oblique relationship to the headlines is the least interesting thing about it. Compared to the Monica/Kathleen/Paula madhouse that Washington and the media have been living in for two months, the sexual goings-on of Jack Stanton, the film's Clinton character, seem almost sedate, and are in any case only one element of the plot. At the New York screening I attended, some of the sex jokes elicited longer laughs than they normally would have, but there was none of the sick-making frisson that *Wag the Dog* stimulated in late January. The grossest on-screen act is committed by the James Carville character (Richard Jemmons, played by Billy Bob Thornton) who exposes himself to a campaign co-worker. But she comes back with a snappy put-down, and turns out to be a lesbian any-

Mr. Brookhiser is an NR *senior editor.*

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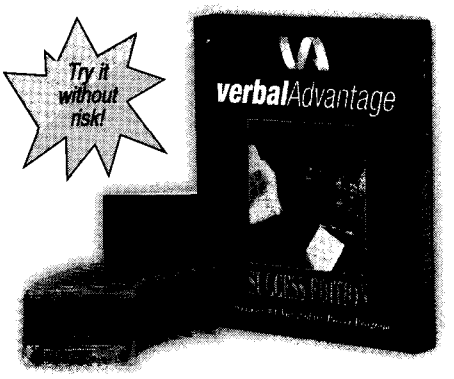

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way, so that's cool. If only Paula Jones had thought of that. The two things that stand out about the movie are the acting, and the philosophy. How does the big screen depict the people we see on the little screen every night? Interestingly. How well does it understand politics? Not well at all—but who does?

Another message the movie conveys is: all politicians are scoundrels, and their rascality corrupts even the good things they claim they want to do.

Just as Dr. Johnson declined to settle the precedence between a flea and a louse, so it is unnecessary to compare each performer to some real-life minor Clintonite. Billy Bob Thornton manages to make James Carville appealing by reversing his energy. Carville is manic, like an eruption of roaches from a baseboard. Thornton is depressed; if he did not have a Southern accent, you would think he had walked in from a Woody Allen movie. Emma Thompson as Susan Stanton adds nothing to our understanding of the First Lady. But John Travolta's Jack Stanton/Bill Clinton is a richly amusing star turn. He gets a dozen details right—the pursed lip when cornered; the raspy voice when tired or "sincere"; the heavy but easy physicality. Travolta looks less gross than Clinton: his nose is long and straight, not the bulbous tuber that has swollen so alarmingly in cartoons over the last few weeks. Travolta also misses Clinton's wonkish, know-it-all side (a weakness which reflects the film's deep failure—see below). Travolta has said he acted "with a valentine in my heart." Yet his acting gives Jack Stanton his most sinister moment. In a speech at the movie's end, when Stanton is trying to persuade a disaffected aide to stick with him, he explains that all politicians have to do dirty deeds to achieve the power that enables them to do good. The aide buys it. But Travolta's eyes, which look straight into the aide's and, over his shoulder, into ours, are a study in phoniness. Don't sell a used soul to this man.

The content of that speech reflects one message of the movie: all politicians are scoundrels, but some of them do good things. Another message the movie conveys is: all politicians are scoundrels, and their rascality corrupts even the good things they claim they want to do. The first view is embraced by the aforementioned aide, Henry Burton (Adrian Lester). The second is the final conclusion of Libby Holden (Kathy Bates), a foul-mouthed, overweight, gun-toting dyke who comes out of retirement to protect Stanton from his many enemies, but who finally despairs. The movie gives weight to both views. Stanton makes his pitch, and Burton makes his choice; but Travolta shows his face, and Libby Holden kills herself.

The messages are, of course, contradictory. Nichols and Klein probably agree with Stanton and Burton, but too much in the movie undercuts them. This isn't complexity; this is not knowing your own mind.

Primary Colors ends in this fashion because its view of politics is mindless. Libby Holden reminds Stanton that at the 1972 Democratic convention, when George McGovern was nominated, and they were young and idealistic, he said that if politics could be clean, "we win, because our ideas are better." Politics, it turns out, is forever dirty. But Stanton is still pushing his ideas.

But what are they? *Primary Colors* gives us no clue. At the beginning, Stanton makes a moving appeal for adult literacy, which is almost immediately revealed as dishonest. He gives a speech on the global economy at a sepulchral factory, whose punchline is that he will work every day for the betterment of workers. But all we see him working at is his waistline and his pick-up lines. How can the movie recommend making a deal with the devil, when it doesn't even know what he is offering? This, in fairness, was never Bill Clinton's problem; on the stump in 1992, whenever he got his mind wrapped around an idea, he would not shut up.

And what about the supposedly ubiquitous dirt of politics? Politics and public life generally are contact sports, but are there no distinctions? Was Washington the same as Benedict Arnold? Hamilton the same as Aaron Burr? Churchill the same as Edward VIII? Anybody at all the same as Bill Clinton? Not knowing this is not just Hollywood's problem. Most political reporters don't know it either. The first two journalists to ballyhoo Clinton were Sidney Blumenthal, then with *The New Republic*, and Joe Klein, then with *New York*. Blumenthal made an ideological calculation: Clinton was the leftmost electable candidate. Once in office, however, Clinton didn't do much for the Left except keep the Right off balance and out of the White House; so the ideological calculation reduces to power. Klein fell for Clinton's 12-step sincerity, then started blowing cold and hot like the weather this winter. *Primary Colors* for all its pizzazz, is feel-good (or feel-bad) mush.

How could Travolta and Nichols figure it out when the press corps can't tell them? □

MACNELLY Chicago Tribune
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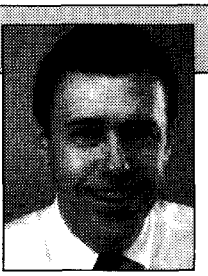
by Mike Hensen



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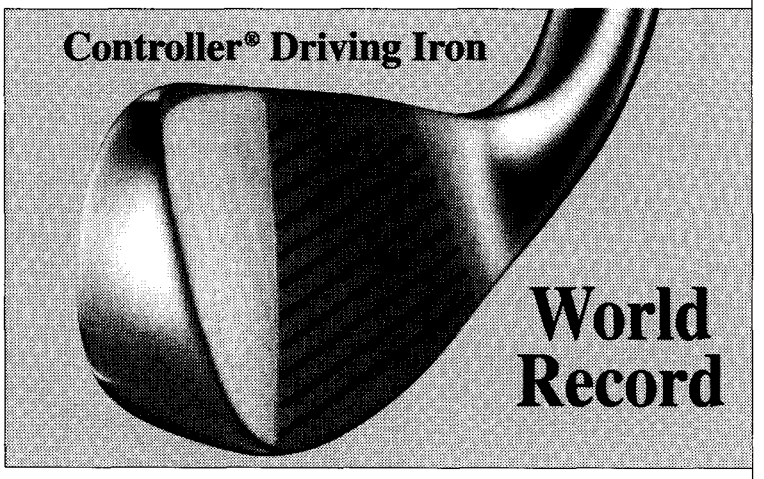

YALESVILLE, CT– The same small Connecticut company that created a golf ball that *flies* too far has introduced two new driving irons that *hit* too far; way too far if you happen to sell woods. Mike Smith, a PGA Pro, recently set a World Record off the grass with the company's 17° driving iron, and stopped just one yard short of matching the record for a *driver* with its 12.5° counterpart. His shots were 335 and 358 yards respectively.

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don't feel alone if you have trouble with your woods, relief is on the way. A company spokesman told me this.

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One golfer told me, it was "...the first time I've played 18 holes and never left the fairway." Another said he cut six strokes, and vowed he would never play with his driver or 3-wood again.

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BREAD & CIRCUSES

Paula Jones, for the Defense

HURRICANE Monica didn't have to happen. A simple acknowledgment by President Clinton back in May 1994 that Paula Corbin Jones was so far as he knew of good character and had not engaged in any improper conduct would have prevented the filing of her lawsuit. Instead, a White House official attributed her delay in filing to the weakness of her case, and Mrs. Jones responded by rejecting the negotiated statement. The subsequent four years of legal wrangling gave Mrs. Jones's legal team the time to track down so many Clinton paramours that you need a deck of trading cards to keep track of them. And now there is a whiff of impeachment in the air as the case of *Jones* v. *Clinton* finally goes to trial in Little Rock on May 27.

The Jones suit has convincingly made the case that the President is a reckless sexual predator, but there's a pesky little legal problem still to be addressed. Mrs. Jones faces real difficulty in proving her case on the terms on which the suit was filed. Despite compelling evidence that Paula Corbin Jones is telling the truth about what happened at the Excelsior Hotel in Little Rock in 1991, her legal claim really is weak, as that White House official said, and Bob Bennett is likely to get the last laugh—at least in the courtroom.

Mrs. Jones has six witnesses whom she told about then-Governor Clinton's advance within days (in two cases, hours) of the encounter. These are six more contemporaneous corroborating witnesses than Anita Hill enjoyed. In his detailed account of Mrs. Jones's factual case, published in *The American Lawyer* in November 1996, Stuart Taylor Jr. concluded that Paula Jones's evidence of "predatory, if not depraved, behavior by Bill Clinton is far stronger than the evidence supporting Anita Hill's allegations of far less serious conduct by Clarence Thomas."

Taylor quoted an earlier assessment he had made of her claim. "My guess is that she's lying, at least about the more lurid details," he had written in 1994. But after interviewing her witnesses and examining other evidence, Taylor was "not so sure of that." He added: "I don't want to believe that the President is a reckless sexual harasser, and I'll never know for sure exactly what happened when Clinton was alone with Jones. But Jones's evidence is highly persuasive."

But a persuasive case that Paula Jones's account is true does not necessarily mean a verdict in her favor. In his motion for summary judgment, the President argues that even if the facts as alleged by Mrs. Jones are true—and he doesn't contradict the state trooper's account of bringing her to the hotel room—she has failed to make a legal case for redress. The Big He is probably right.

Mrs. Jones missed the filing deadline for a sexual-harassment claim under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act and so is suing instead for denial of equal protection and workplace discrimination under section 1983 of the Act. "Because she was time-barred from the more appropriate claim," says Anita Blair, General Counsel of the Independent Women's Forum, "she has to shoehorn herself into other theories that don't quite fit." Miss Blair points out that such a weak legal case might have been dismissed long ago—i.e., before Linda Tripp ever met Monica Lewinsky—were it not for the stalling tactics of the high-profile Bob Bennett. "Had the President hired a local lawyer who hangs his shingle in the shadow of the Little Rock courthouse, that lawyer would have treated it like a straight legal matter, and early cooperation and discovery might have won an early dismissal."

Gerald Skoning, a Chicago attorney who represents management in employment litigation, agrees that Paula Jones has a weak case even if her account of Bill Clinton's behavior is true. Mr. Skoning's "educated speculation" is that summary judgment might be appropriate because there is no genuine issue of material fact for a jury to decide. Even if Bill Clinton did everything in the hotel room that Paula Jones alleges, her case asserts workplace discrimination, for which there is precious little evidence.

Mrs. Jones has attempted to show that women employed by the state benefitted from relationships with Governor Clinton. Maybe, but she will have trouble showing that her rejection of him had a negative impact on her job. There is apparently no evidence that Governor Clinton ever spoke to anyone in Paula Jones's office, and employment records reveal that her job was upgraded and that she received merit and cost-of-living raises.

The elements of a sexual-harassment claim under Title VII have been held by courts to inform a discrimination claim under section 1983. Here too Mrs. Jones is unlikely to be able to meet her legal burden. A plaintiff must prove either that a refusal to submit to sexual advances led to a tangible job detriment, or that the harassment created a "hostile environment." Mr. Skoning explains that the latter claim requires conduct that is "repeated and pervasive"; a single incident is unlikely to meet the legal test.

Finally, Mrs. Jones asserts that she suffered "emotional distress so severe no reasonable person could be expected to endure it" as a result of the egregious actions of a state official. The evidence? Her examination by a counselor, seven years after the incident, who concluded that Mrs. Jones suffers from post-traumatic stress disorder and a "sexual aversion." There is no other evidence—i.e., no evidence whatsoever—of emotional distress.

IF Paula Corbin Jones can't prove the essential elements of her claim, her loss will be used by the President's defenders to discredit every beauty queen, high-school sweetheart, airline stewardess, grieving widow, or intern who has accused him of sexual misconduct. All the more reason for Ken Starr to wrap up his grand-jury investigation before Bill Clinton is "vindicated" by a Little Rock jury and the Paula Jones case becomes yet another weapon in the Clinton arsenal of spin.

—KATE O'BEIRNE

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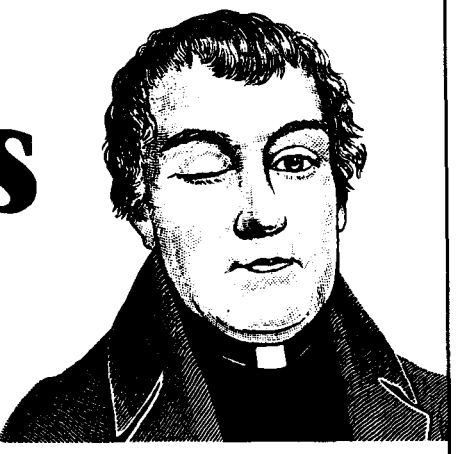
Treacherous Catholics?



The Vatican thunders against abortion, illicit sex, assisted suicide, dissenting theologians, and more. But in all too many parishes we don't hear much, if anything, about the ongoing slaughter of preborn babies, or the Church's teachings on homosexuality, pre-marital sex, pornography, etc. Papal authority and Hell are taboo subjects. Where's the beef? We just get marshmallows — and platitudes and pop psychology.

Even if these parishes and their priests look Catholic, we may wonder if they're just pretending to be Catholic. Some clerics, we now know, have been pretending to be celibate. Broken vows. Violated trust. Abuse of position. Flagrant sin. A field day for those, especially in the media, who hate the Church. Suspicion cast upon our good, hard-working priests. It's all so *very sad*.

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Those who make excuses for wayward priests, bishops, and Religious are logically required to excuse all the Jim Bakkers and Jimmy Swaggarts too. This would be to make a farce of Christianity.

Sex scandals in the Catholic Church were few and far between before the sex revolution of the 60s and before Vatican II got misinterpreted to mean "anything goes." So a married priesthood is no cure-all. Indeed, many of the recent offenders aren't attracted to the opposite sex, and remember that Bakker and Swaggart were married men when they fell. Mandatory celibacy isn't the problem.

But we *have* a problem, and it's profound. Broadly speaking, the real problem is that in certain sectors of Catholicism there's been a failure of faith in the teaching authority Christ conferred upon His Church, and consequently a tragic capitulation to a decadent culture. If the full Catholic Faith isn't being preached from the pulpit, we shouldn't be too shocked if it isn't being observed in the rectory either.

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THE GENTLEMAN FROM MASSACHUSETTS

Ready Teddy

If the Kennedy family influence is declining, nobody bothered to tell Ted Kennedy.

JOHN J. MILLER

SEN. Ted Kennedy (D., Mass.) rarely misses an opportunity to take a shot across the aisle. On March 18, during a charged Labor and Human Resources Committee meeting on the pending tobacco deal, chairman Jim Jeffords (R., Vt.) had a bill on the table to require a 60 per cent reduction over ten years in smoking by people under age 21. Kennedy launched into a fierce attack on Republicans, accusing them of selling out to tobacco lobbyists. He then offered an amendment that would have required an 80 per cent drop in underage smoking. If you don't vote for my amendment, he roared, you're allowing 1.1 million children to smoke, and one-third of them will die. Kennedy picked up two GOP votes, and his amendment passed.

Republicans hate and fear Kennedy not because he has the most liberal voting record in the Senate—it is possible, though barely, to outflank him on the left—but because he's so good at advancing his causes through a clever mix of demagoguery and pragmatism. In front of TV cameras or on the Senate floor, he will accuse Republicans of heinous iniquities. The GOP "is basically anti-civil-rights, anti-immigrant, anti-women, [and] anti-worker," he said in December. Yet behind closed doors, he is adept at sweet-talking the odd Republican into helping him expand government-run health care or increase the minimum wage. Over the last four years, Kennedy has become the Democrats' most vital asset in the Senate, a guerrilla fighter whose party may not be able to control the legislative agenda, but who keeps Majority Leader Trent Lott and the GOP constantly off balance.

Few predicted this turn of events. Many observers wrote Kennedy's political obituary following the 1991 Palm Beach incident, when he dragged his nephew William Kennedy Smith to a local bar late at night, where the young man met a woman whom he allegedly raped. The next year, Kennedy delivered a sort of mea culpa speech at Harvard, in which he appeared to confess to leading a reckless personal life. He had not attracted a strong Republican challenger in any of his five previous re-elections, but in 1994 he actually trailed businessman Mitt Romney in the polls just a few weeks before voters cast their ballots. Kennedy wound up winning handily in a year that saw other liberal giants—such as New York Gov. Mario Cuomo and House Speaker Thomas Foley—drown in a GOP tidal wave.

Ted Kennedy by Roman Genn

It is tempting to underestimate Jack and Bobby Kennedy's 66-year-old kid brother. For all his insider slickness and survival skills, Kennedy can come across as a bumbler. He does not walk the halls of Congress so much as waddle through them. He is not slow, just awkward. His 6-foot-2 frame moves ponderously, with free-swinging arms sandwiching a wide middle stiffened by back pain. He leans so far forward as he walks that it seems only invisible puppet wires keep him from falling face first on the floor. During the 1994 campaign, his negotiators insisted on three-foot-wide lecterns for the TV debates in order to hide Kennedy's waistline. A post-election exercise regimen apparently helped him shed some pounds, but his weight is back up again. Suits tailored for a trimmer Ted wear poorly now.

His extemporaneous speeches are often loud, but rarely eloquent. Sometimes he makes even George Bush sound silver-tongued. During a debate in 1994, gay-rights advocate Kennedy announced that he favored "access to discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation." Asked on *Meet the Press* last fall about President Clinton's appointments, Kennedy responded, "There are a number of—even as the—Bill Rehnquist, who—the Supreme Court has pointed that out."

Despite these handicaps, Kennedy appears to have set the Democratic agenda heading into this November's elections. Speaking at the National Press Club late last year, he outlined plans to increase the tax on cigarettes by $1.50 per pack, broaden the Family and Medical Leave Act to allow time off for "parent–teacher conferences or other school-related occasions," and provide large subsidies for college education. His central initiative, however, is to hike the minimum wage, and this is bound to become a main Democratic theme in the months ahead.

Kennedy masterminded the Democrats' strategy on the minimum wage in 1996, when he pushed a 90-cent increase through the GOP-controlled Congress. From his point of view, the outcome that year was perfect: Republicans initially took a hard line against an issue that's always popular with the public, Kennedy pummeled them for weeks, and finally the GOP caved in. Lott was so frustrated that shortly before his election as Majority Leader fol-

Mr. Miller is NR's national political reporter.

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lowing Bob Dole's retirement—supposedly his moment of triumph—he blurted out, "Ted Kennedy does not run the world."

Republicans are understandably wary this time around. Kennedy originally wanted to increase the wage by $1.50 over three years, which would raise it to $6.65 per hour in 2000, and then to index it to inflation thereafter. Always willing to make short-term compromises in the interests of long-term goals, he accepted President Clinton's pared-down proposal to boost hourly wages by $1.00 over two years, without indexing. "Republicans have learned

Shortly before his election as Majority Leader, Trent Lott blurted out, 'Ted Kennedy does not run the world.'

that it is dangerous to resist a Democratic increase in the minimum wage in an election year," he said. There is speculation that Republicans are willing to bargain in order to avoid a repeat of 1996. They may, for instance, combine a boost in the minimum wage with paycheck protection (against automatic deductions for union dues) or flextime. But don't count on Kennedy to support any plans that would generate resistance from the unions.

On health care, Kennedy continues to pursue a policy of incrementalism. House Majority Leader Dick Armey has complained about the recent waves of "some Kennedy–Fill-in-the-Blank-Republican bill" to expand the Federal Government's role in health care—words that Kennedy himself quotes with glee. In 1996, it was Kennedy–Kassebaum, which provided health-insurance portability and made it tougher to refuse coverage to people with preexisting conditions. Last year, it was Kennedy–Hatch, which increased tobacco taxes and created a health-care entitlement for lower-income children [see "Spoiled Rotten," p. 39]. Dismayed by Kennedy's influence during that debate, Sen. Dan Coats (R., Ind.) complained, "It's got to be a Republican agenda, not a Ted Kennedy agenda." But the Ted

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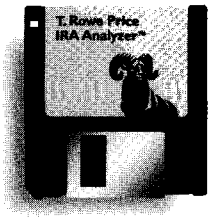

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Kennedy agenda continues to roll forward. Now he wants to cap health-insurance premiums to stem the rising costs spurred partly by his own lawmaking. Another Kennedy–Fill-in-the-Blank-Republican bill may be on the way.

Much of Kennedy's success is due to the efforts of devoted aides. "He has the very best staff on the Hill," admits one GOP staffer who is no fan. A number of liberal all-stars started out with Kennedy, including Supreme Court Justice Stephen Breyer, the late Commerce Secretary Ron Brown, and Democratic strategist Susan Estrich. Kennedy exploits his family name and his ties to Harvard in attracting talent, but he also is known for his loyalty to former employees. The Clinton Administration is peppered with Kennedy alumni, who are happy to augment his influence. And unlike several other high-powered senators, he is reportedly a pleasant boss.

On a personal level, friends say that Kennedy's marriage in 1992 to Victoria Reggie, a divorcee 22 years his junior, has rejuvenated him. Although Kennedy never has discussed it publicly, his first marriage, to Joan Bennett, apparently was annulled. (He took communion at his mother's funeral Mass in 1995.) Kennedy wears no wedding ring, but his lawyer-wife is a constant companion who helps craft his public image and helps him develop legislation as well. Whatever lifestyle he led before meeting her seems truly a thing of the past.

Kennedy's accomplishments also owe a lot to his influence with President Clinton, whom the senator has carefully cultivated over the years. After Clinton lost his 1980 bid for re-election as governor of Arkansas, Kennedy was the first national figure to call. The two men are not close friends, but they appear to have bonded as political allies, counseling each other on both strategy and policy. Right after the White House intern scandal broke, when few in Washington were willing to say anything nice in public, let alone in private, Kennedy phoned Clinton to offer support. "I think he'll be vindicated," Kennedy told reporters.

Many Democratic senators view Clinton as a two-bit former governor who rose to power and has stayed there thanks to an amazing run of luck. Not Kennedy. He has no White House envy—he has said repeatedly that he will seek another Senate term in 2000—and regularly uses the President as the vehicle for his own policy initiatives. "Many of Clinton's achievements have come out of Kennedy's shop," says a lobbyist. When the two have a serious political disagreement, as they did over the welfare-reform law signed by Clinton, they avoid public recriminations. More often, they go out of their way to compliment each other.

Few Republicans join Clinton in extending kind words to Kennedy, although some express grudging admiration for his dogged advocacy of causes he believes in. Kennedy, for his part, knows dedication when he sees it. "He had what was rather unique in terms of politicians today—he stuck by his guns," Kennedy said recently. He was talking about Ronald Reagan. □

Balkanized

The wonder is not that Serbia attacked Kosovo, but that it waited so long.

MARK ALMOND

"IT began in Kosovo. There it will end." Even before the eruption of violence in Serbia's southern province in February, it was commonly assumed that the simmering discontent between the 90 per cent Albanian majority and the Serb minority that controls the region would mark the final disintegration of Yugoslavia. It was in Kosovo in 1987 that Slobodan Milosevic came to prominence as the first Yugoslav Communist to adopt nationalistic rhetoric as the way out of the dead end of the old system. Two years later, Milosevic, using his power as Serbia's Communist Party boss, abolished Kosovo's autonomy. From there it was downhill all the way for internal peace in Yugoslavia, as Slovenes, Croats, and then Bosnians declared independence in order to escape a similar fate.

And yet, during the bitter years of war in Bosnia, Kosovo was the one Balkan volcano that did not erupt, even when U.S. warplanes shattered the myth of Serb invincibility in the run-up to the Dayton Accords in 1995. Despite their massive majority, and although they had declared independence in 1992, Kosovo's two million Albanians seemed more Gandhian than the Mahatma in their dogged attachment to political inertia as a means of gaining independence. As Milosevic's dream of greater Serbia fell apart, the Kosovo Albanians seemed never to lose an opportunity to lose an opportunity.

What they apparently did not understand is that the West helps those who help themselves. Lip service to the virtues of peaceful protest was combined with Western indifference to the Albanians' cause so long as they ignored the lesson of recent history from Palestine to Northern Ireland: The peace process grows out of the barrel of a gun. Finally, the Kosovo Albanians seem to be catching on.

In 1996, a Maoist-style guerrilla operation calling itself the Kosovo Liberation Army emerged. Pursuing a classic strategy, the KLA has carried out attacks on Serb officials and civilians, hoping to provoke a backlash by the Serb authorities.

Mr. Almond teaches modern history at Oriel College, Oxford.

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For nearly two years there was no response. Then, this February, Serbian paramilitary police launched a search-and-destroy operation in the Drenica region with the usual level of civilian casualties.

Given Milosevic's past role in inciting ethnic conflict in order to shore up his power base, Westerners instantly assumed he must be behind the current crisis. However, there is strong evidence that Milosevic did not want this cauldron to boil over. Whatever crimes he has been justly accused of in the past, he has an acute sense of his own self-interest, and the last thing he wants is to provoke firm Western action.

Ever since the mass protest movement against him in Serbia itself last spring, Milosevic has been maneuvering to keep afloat. He got himself elected president of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia last summer. That seemed a neat switch in order to allow a fellow Serb Socialist, Milan Milutinovic, to take up his previous post as president of Serbia, but the plan began to go awry when an unexpected rival appeared on the scene.

Until last summer, Milo Djukanovic, the prime minister of Montenegro—the tiny republic that makes up the other half of the Federal Republic—had been a loyal client of Milosevic's. Suddenly, Djukanovic jumped ship and became Milosevic's most vociferous critic. Just as that Pasionaria of ethnic cleansing, Mrs. Plavsic, became the West's favorite Bosnian politician, so Mr. Djukanovic reinvented himself as market reformer instead of the arch-black marketeer he had been during the sanctions of 1991–95.

Milosevic recognized that Washington had abandoned its old policy of trying to find genuinely democratic politicians to support in ex-Yugoslavia and instead was willing to put its weight behind renegade apparatchiks like Djukanovic. In those circumstances, Milosevic, who was himself used to being treated as America's favorite ex-Communist in the region, did not want to do anything which might precipitate a crisis and in turn lead to international intervention.

So all last fall, the heavily armed Serbian paramilitary police treated the KLA with kid gloves. For the first time, the body count went against the Serb forces, who had ruled with such brutality since 1989. Yet they did not hit back. During the election season in Serbia and little Montenegro, the normally hamfisted Serb police rolled with the KLA's punches.

However, letting his boys take casualties without revenge was a high-risk strategy for Milosevic. More than the poorly armed and ill-trained army, Milosevic relies on the Serbian police as his praetorian guard. Their loyalty was stretched thin by his passivity in the face of KLA attacks.

And this situation was skillfully exploited by Milosevic's chief rival within Serbia, Vojislav Seselj, leader of the Serbian Radical Party. Seselj was an active ethnic cleanser in 1992, and in the intervening years he has no more become a Western-style democrat than Djukanovic has. During and since the campaign leading up to last fall's elections (in which he wound up losing to Milutinovic for president of Serbia), Seselj has been fostering links with the Serbian police and presenting himself as the defender of their right to strike back at "terrorism." By mid-February, Milosevic must have realized that his hold on the police was being weakened by his softball tactics. The savage Drenica crackdown allowed the police to let off steam, and do what they do worst. It was also a reminder to Kosovo Albanians that although the KLA is able to launch hit-and-run attacks, civilians are less mo-

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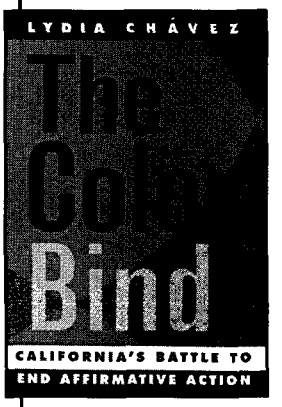

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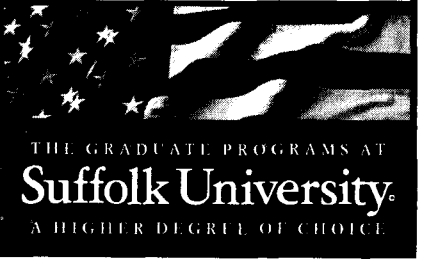

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bile. (At that, the Serb forces succeeded in knocking out one KLA group.)

And so the stalemate is likely to continue. Milosevic senses rivals in Belgrade circling, trying to trip him up.

Serbs know that if they slaughtered the despised Albanians, the West would probably launch airstrikes to punish them.

The Kosovo Albanians know that their densely populated region could become a killing field if the Serbs let go with all their firepower. The Serbs know that if they slaughtered the despised Albanians, the West would probably launch airstrikes to punish them, a high price for a renewed ethnic cleansing. The only people who are sitting pretty are the shadowy KLA. For many Albanians—and readers of *The New York Review of Books* transported back to their days of solidarity with the FNLM guerrillas of El Salvador and even the Vietcong—they are the heroes. But the human cost of their hit-and-run attacks could yet be high for their compatriots.

Meanwhile, as if in a ghostly replay of the West's disastrous reaction to the break-up of Yugoslavia in 1991, Special Envoy to the Balkans Robert Gelbard and his European Union counterparts recite the self-contradictory mantra that they want democracy and human rights for the Kosovo Albanians but they also want to keep the region inside Rump Yugoslavia. Only force keeps Kosovo inside Yugoslavia now. The KLA is testing how far counterforce will move the West toward pushing Belgrade to let it go. It seems that Kosovo is in for a few more atrocities before its fate becomes clearer. Let the peace process begin. □

Dobson's Choice

The religious Right seems in disarray. It is really suffering from its own success.

MICHAEL BARONE

THE Christian Coalition is reportedly suffering financial problems. Promise Keepers has gone broke. Pat Robertson's Christian Broadcasting Network has just been fined for violating campaign-finance laws (ten years ago!). James Dobson of Focus on the Family has threatened to disown the Republican Party. The Family Research Council's Gary Bauer, contemplating a run for President, laments that religious conservatives have almost nothing to show for their 18-year commitment to the Republican Party. Is the religious Right finished as a major force in American politics? Are Christian conservatives and the Republican Party headed for divorce?

To understand what's going on it is best to take a long view. The two major sources of energy, enthusiasm, and élan in the two parties today are the religious Right and the feminist Left. Both speak for millions of Americans.

Yet 25 years ago neither was a major political force. In 1972, when the McGovern campaign's convention managers had to lose one procedural challenge in order to set a parliamentary precedent that would allow them to win California, the one they chose to sacrifice was a challenge to the South Carolina delegation because it didn't contain enough women. The feminists, they calculated, were the weakest part of their coalition. In 1976, the Republican Party nominated Gerald Ford, who was against restricting abortion. Fundamentalist and evangelical Christians in large numbers voted for Jimmy Carter in the fall. The religious Right was not an articulate part of either party's coalition.

Since then, obviously, things have changed. The one group which Bill Clinton chose to appear before outside the convention hall in New York City in 1992 was the women's caucus. And since Ronald Reagan was elected, the religious Right has exercised a veto power over the Republican presidential and vice-presidential nominations.

THROUGH all this the religious Right, like the feminist Left, has taken many organizational forms. Remember the Moral Majority, which liberals liked to say was neither moral nor a majority? It closed its doors years ago. And where was Ralph Reed, for eight years head of the Christian Coalition founded by Pat Robertson, when Robertson was running for President in 1988? Working in Jack Kemp's campaign. If today several organizations of the religious Right—and we should remember that Promise Keepers is not a political group—are foundering and others are seething with discontent, it is also true that the feminist Left is in disarray as more and more charges of sexual misconduct are being made against its paladin, Bill Clinton.

What is the function of groups like the Christian Coalition, or the National Organization for Women? When a political movement is new, attempting to draw on the inchoate appeal of its ideas to a hitherto unassembled constituency, it must articulate a set of messages and goals around which it can organize like-minded voters. Groups set agendas, establish litmus tests, lobby officeholders, and rate candidates. Over twenty years the feminist Left and the religious Right both have created constituencies of great size and force in American politics.

In the process, tensions inevitably arise between these organizations and the political parties and officeholders with whom they become allied. The groups are typically seeking goals that are not popular with the voting majority. After all, conventional politicians will usually do popular things without much prodding. The groups' goals, moreover, often split existing party coalitions; both parties' coalitions were split and reshaped on the issue of abortion. And there will be struggles between groups that are practical-minded

Mr. Barone is Senior Staff Editor of Reader's Digest, *and co-author of* The Almanac of American Politics.

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and ones that are principle-minded, the former arguing for half-a-loaf solutions, which are more likely to be politically saleable (the partial-birth-abortion ban), the latter digging in their heels for what they ideally want, even if that is unpopular with the majority (banning abortion altogether). Think of the contrast between Ralph Reed, always ready to work with almost any Republican, and James Dobson, always ready to condemn Republicans for straying from principles.

What is happening now is that the religious Right has achieved most of the goals set by its practical-minded leaders, leaving its principle-minded leaders angry and frustrated that they have not done more. When Ralph Reed was its most visible leader, the religious Right enthusiastically supported the Republicans in 1994 and 1996. Their piece of the Contract with America was the $500-per-child tax credit, which eventually became law. Partial-birth abortion has become a visible national issue, and the proposed ban on the procedure has passed both houses of Congress by large margins. The fulcrum point of opinion on abortion generally has moved toward the position of the religious Right.

But an outright ban on abortion remains highly unpopular. Action on many other issues can be blocked by Clinton vetoes. And Republicans in Congress, after the beating they took in public opinion on the 1995–96 budget fight, have been skittish about raising almost any issue on which they are likely to be attacked by the feminist-Left-dominated press. A strong argument can be made that congressional Republicans have become too timid. But it is also true that their narrow majorities, especially in the House, mean that the small number of Republicans who don't favor culturally conservative stands can deprive the party of its majority. That is what has happened on National Endowment for the Arts funding. And Republicans certainly can't deliver the two-thirds vote needed for a constitutional amendment allowing prayer in school.

REPUBLICAN leaders can make a case that they're doing just about as much for the religious Right as they can, and on occasion they evidently have made this case: after House Majority Leader Dick Armey met with Dr. Dobson in mid March, Dobson abruptly cancelled meetings with the *New York Times* and *Washington Post*

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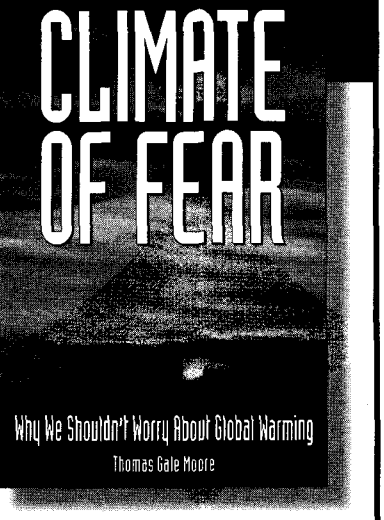

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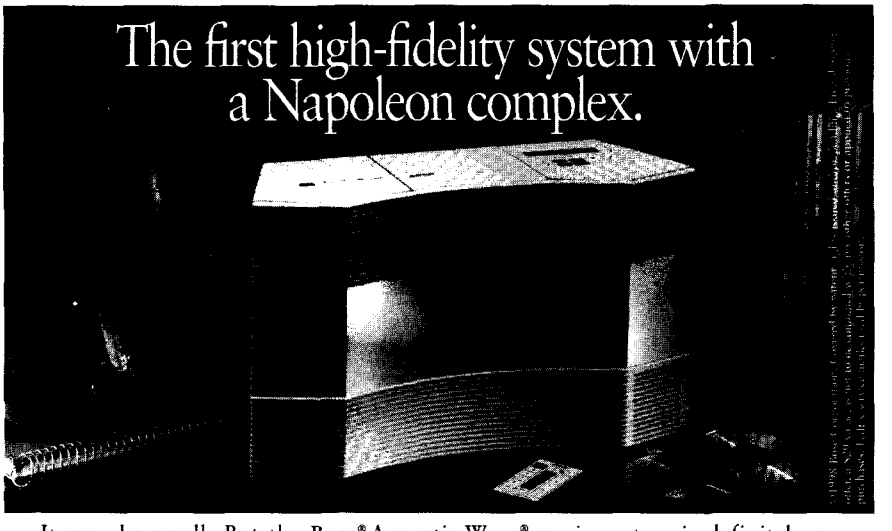

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editorial boards, at which he had been expected to criticize congressional Republicans.

All of this strikes me as evidence less of sickness than of health in the relationship between the religious Right and Republican politicians. What we're watching are attempts to bridge the gap between principle-minded groups, which have an incentive to seek the unpopular, and political officeholders, who have an incentive to seek the popular. This is evidence of the success, not the failure, of the religious Right. If the constituency its activists have brought together has become too large to be manipulated by those activists, it has also become too large to be ignored by politicians.

Bauer and others are evidently talking about settling on one presidential candidate for 2000, in the hopes of getting a true believer. But Reed was talking about the same thing in 1994 and 1995, and found that it was impossible: almost every Republican candidate (definitely including Bob Dole) made a plausible case to religious-Right voters, enlisted religious-Right activists in the campaign, and won significant numbers of religious-Right votes. The leaders of the religious Right several years ago refuted the *Washington Post*'s charge that their constituency is poor and uneducated; now they are finding out that it is not easily led.

Right now I would rather have the problems of the religious Right than those of the feminist Left.

Of course there is the possibility of a nasty rupture that the press will delightedly seize on and which may demoralize both the constituency and the politicians. But right now I would rather have the problems of the religious Right than those of the feminist Left—of mobilizing a constituency understandably dissatisfied with what its political allies have been able to achieve than of maintaining the morale of a constituency whose political champion has betrayed some of its core beliefs. At the moment, of course, that's little comfort to James Dobson. □

UNreformed

Kofi Annan is subtle, canny—and a threat to U.S. interests.

STEFAN HALPER

IN his 16th month as Secretary General of the United Nations, Kofi Annan has emerged as a serious challenge to the perquisites—and scope—of America's superpower status. Unlike his predecessor, Boutros Boutros-Ghali, an imperious exponent of Third World aspirations, Mr. Annan has spent his 32 years in the UN bureaucracy engaged in quiet diplomacy and artful coalition-building of the kind former Secretary of State George Shultz was thinking when he likened diplomacy to keeping a garden. The *Financial Times* describes Annan as "a man with few enemies . . . with the soft answer that turneth away wrath." The latest imbroglio with Saddam Hussein illustrates how these qualities, matched with a subtle instinct for power, are helping him challenge Washington's primacy on the world stage.

Much of this goes back to 1992, when Madeleine Albright and her team arrived at the United Nations spouting the virtues of "multilateralism," an intellectual contraption designed to mask their confusion about how and when military power should be used. It fit nicely with Boutros-Ghali's kaleidoscopic ambition, but its limits soon became clear. The UN lacks its own general staff, and so has proved unable to integrate command, control, communications, and intelligence—a precondition to coherent military action. The resulting mismanagement of crises in Somalia, Bosnia, and Cambodia heaped disaster upon disaster. Fortunately Boutros-Ghali's dyspeptic flamboyance alerted the U.S. and others to his expansive agenda in the peace-making arena and, more fundamentally, to his determination to transfer wealth and resources from the developed to the developing world, causing even the Clinton Administration to resist his election to a second term. When Annan, a U.S.-educated Ghanian whose rough edges were knocked off decades ago, emerged as a compromise candidate acceptable to both First and Third World members, many thought there would be peace in the valley.

Now Washington confronts a far more subtle and capable presence. In place of the astringent and controversial Boutros-Ghali—who told John Goshko of the *Washington Post* that "perhaps half the UN staff does nothing useful"—Annan has deep friendships extending to almost all the fiefdoms of the UN system. His modus operandi was evident in Iraq, when after meeting with Saddam he called all the traveling staff together, including security guards and chauffeurs, to let them know what was going on. He has an extraordinary feel for the institution. In the current complex UN environment—where Washington faces old problems like the broad animus in the General Assembly and new ones like the restored Franco-Russian détente in the Security Council—his influence on world opinion, and hence his power, is striking.

Sensing this, the Clinton team tried to limit Annan's scope in the Iraqi crisis. However, Clinton, distracted by the Lewinsky affair, wandered into a cul de sac, giving Annan his entrée. President Clinton threatened to bomb if the weapons inspectors were not allowed full access to Iraqi sites, but he had no follow-up plan or exit strategy. He thus confronted the nasty choice of bombing Saddam and almost certainly squandering his 60-per-cent-plus approval ratings—as CNN brought home the carnage with no end in sight—or handing the problem over to a hesitant Mr. Annan. The White House apparently did not think through the implications of supporting Annan's negotiations with Saddam: i.e., that we would be obliged to accept the results as long as the script was followed.

When the Secretary General achieved

Mr. Halper is a former White House and State Department official. He writes a syndicated column and anchors Radio America's This Week from Washington.

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the qualified agreement to permit some resumption of inspections, Washington's options were reduced to threatening military action if Saddam broke the agreement. Thus the stage was set for a turn in relations between the United States and the United Nations. At issue was the simple question of whether the U.S. had to obtain UN agreement before using military force when it believed its national-security interests were at stake. All prior Administrations have said no. More importantly, they have largely avoided circumstances where the question could be raised. Recall that President Bush had broad support both in the region and on the Security Council and had assembled a "coalition of the willing" *before* the UN passed the resolution to remove Saddam from Kuwait. Secretary of State James A. Baker III gave explicit directions to his staff not to "get wound around the UN axle." Mr. Clinton has managed to do just that.

IN THE swirl of events surrounding the Iraqi crisis, Kofi Annan has advanced the UN's global position as it has never been advanced before. He quietly exploited the difference between the Clinton Administration's words and deeds on the issue of seeking Security Council permission before taking military action. On ABC-TV's *This Week* program, Annan said: "If the United States had to strike, I think some sort of consultations with the other members [of the Security Council] would be required."

Two days later President Clinton, referring to UN resolutions on Iraq, said, "We think the resolution gives us the authority to take whatever actions are necessary. But, of course, we would consult. It would be unthinkable that we wouldn't do that."

Annan replied, "I think the President has said exactly what I said on television on Sunday." Mr. Annan went on to say: ". . . there was consultation this time around. So consultation is the way we do business in the international community. And I agree with what the President has said."

In these exchanges Mr. Clinton asserts that America has the authority to take whatever military action it deems necessary—but then dismisses his own assertion by volunteering American consultation with the UN before taking military action. The term "consult" is left undefined, but the clear implication

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Incitement to Violence

Do the Palestinians Live up to Their Oslo Commitments?

In the so-called "Oslo Agreement", Israel undertook unilaterally to make valuable concessions to the Palestinians, concessions that would eventually enable them to form an autonomous entity. Israel requested very little in return—primarily that the Palestinians would abstain from violence and from incitement to violence.

What are the facts?

The reality, regrettably, has not at all lived up to the agreement made. While Arafat and other Palestinian leaders proclaim their peaceful intentions in English before Western audiences, they are brutally frank when they address their own people in Arabic and away from Western television cameras. There is constant incitement to violence and frank declaration of the ultimate goal—namely the destruction of the State of Israel and its replacement by "Palestine," an Arab state.

The statements that follow were made by Palestinian leaders within the last twelve months. They are representative of many others in the same vein.

PA Chairman Yasser Arafat ***(Palestinian Television, August 9, 1997):*** *"We must confront them, we must confront them. We must confront them in every sense of the word."*

Yasser Arafat ***(Palestinian Television, August 6, 1997):*** *"...let us commit ourselves before Allah and the Palestinian people that we shall lead the coming battle as we have led previous battles. An oath is an oath and a promise is a promise. The whole world stands by us, while they are alone. They are afraid, but we are not. We cling to the oath and the promise. The Palestinian people is faithful to its oath, the one which we swore upon the first day when the initial shot was fired and the first of our martyrs fell...We are marching together with the blessing of Allah, my brothers, we are marching together to Jerusalem, Jerusalem, Jerusalem."*

Kamel Hamid, head of Fatah (a faction of the PLO) ***(At a Rally, August 10, 1997):*** *"...all means are legitimate to uproot the despicable occupation."*

Sheikh Hamed Bitawi, chairman of the Palestine Religious Scholars Association ***(July 27, 1997):*** *"That which befell the infidel nations will also occur to the State of Israel. We are certain that Allah will destroy the State of Israel either through natural disasters, such as an earthquake, or at the hands of the Moslems, or both."*

PA Mufti Ikrama Sabri ***(In a sermon at Al-Aksa Mosque, July 11, 1997):*** *"Oh Allah, destroy America for she is ruled by Zionist Jews...Allah shall take revenge on behalf of his prophet against the colonialist settlers who are sons of monkeys and pigs..."*

PA Minister for Jerusalem Affairs Feisal Husseini ***(May 18, 1997):*** *"Israel is attempting to obstruct peace...The only option remaining for us will be an alternative option...war."*

Yasser Arafat ***(Addressing a crowd in Tulkarem, April 28, 1997):*** *"I now see the walls of Jerusalem, the mosques of Jerusalem, the churches of Jerusalem. My brothers! With blood and with spirit we will redeem you, Palestine!"*

Nabil Ramlawi ***(At a session of the U.N. Commission on Human Rights, Reported March 17, 1997):*** *"Israeli authorities...infected by injection 300 Palestinian children with the HIV virus during the years of the intifada."*

All of these quotations are only a minute fraction of the inflammatory statements with which Palestinian leaders whip up their followers to a frenzy of hatred and violence against Israel. It is in line with all the other acts of defiance and non-compliance on the part of the Palestinians. Most egregiously perhaps, that famous Covenant that unequivocally calls for the destruction of Israel has never been rescinded. Instead of combating terrorist activity, the Palestinian Authority (P.A.) continues to release well-known members of terrorist groups. Another blatant violation is the size and the weaponry of the so-called P.A. police force, which was fixed by Oslo at a maximum of 24,000, but which is now estimated at over 50,000 members, many of them former terrorists. How do people expect Israel to bring further "sacrifices for peace" to appease these fanatics and why, in the face of daily evidence of Palestinian intransigence and murderous hatred, should Israel even consider turning over vital strategic assets to those who are openly committed to its destruction? Peace will not come to this part of the world until the Palestinians and the Arab nations commit themselves to full acceptance of Israel and are willing to live with it in peace. And that day seems to be a long way off.

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is that one consults with the objective of gaining agreement. Both Mr. Clinton and Mr. Annan say that consultation is normal and expected. Thus, to the degree that this exchange sets a precedent, Mr. Clinton has seriously compromised America's freedom of action on the world stage.

Remarkably, this exchange received limited attention amid the ongoing controversy over UN reform and the United States' unpaid dues. But these issues pale in importance next to the pivotal question of whether Washington must have UN agreement before acting. Any repeat of February/March's Iraqi scenario will cement a precedent that has been flatly unacceptable to all previous administrations, Republican or Democratic. But that is not the only matter over which Kofi Annan casts a shadow. As predicted by Michael Michalski in *NR* last year ["Who's the Deadbeat?," May 5, and "Assessing the UN," July 14], he is skillfully turning the question of UN reform—put on the table by the U.S. some ten years ago, and sustained by its current refusal to pay some $1.5 billion in back dues—to the advantage of his constituents in the UN bureaucracy and the Third World.

Congress had demanded reductions in the UN's worldwide staff of 53,000 (not including the nearly 10,000 consultants or the peacekeeping forces, which reached 80,000 in 1993) and reductions in the most generous salary and benefits packages in public life. In December the General Assembly approved an Annan reform plan that its author called a "quiet revolution." The plan, in nearly impenetrable prose, proposes to consolidate twelve secretarial departments into five, but without cutting any of the 9,000-strong secretarial staff. Three economic-development departments, representing $122 million of the Secretariat's budget and employing 700 people, are reduced to one—again without reductions in personnel or expenditures. Also, two human-rights offices in Geneva are merged into one—again without reductions in personnel or expenditures. A very quiet revolution indeed.

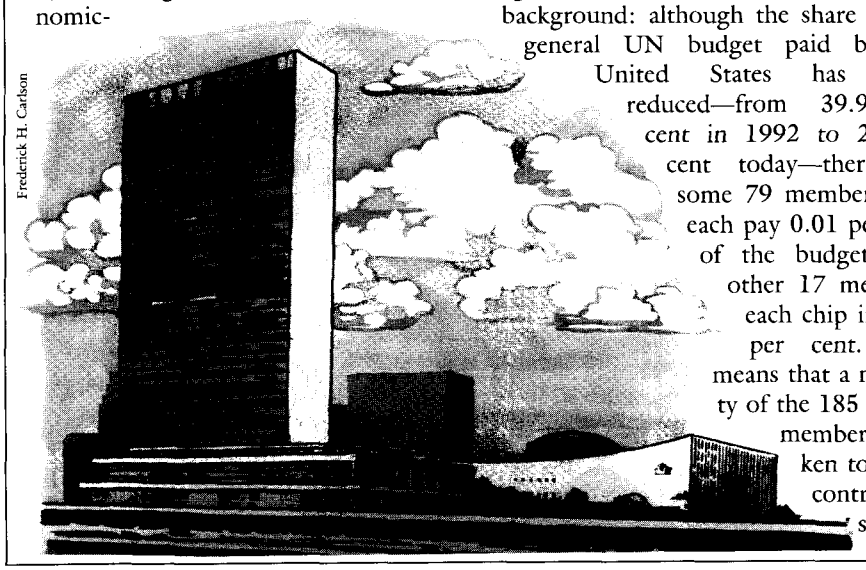
Payment of past dues should hinge on tangible reforms in four categories.

Nor does the reform address salary issues or the lack of an independent Inspector General. Last year a mid-level UN accountant made $84,000, as opposed to an average of $41,962 for his private-sector counterpart. An assistant secretary general got $190,250; the Mayor of New York got $130,000. Most UN salaries are tax free; many employees have rent subsidies of up to $3,800 a month and also have annual education grants of $12,675 per child. But apparently Mr. Annan regards these arrangements as bare-bones essentials: no changes are proposed in his plan.

Americans had also expressed concerns about the UN's peacekeeping missions; on these, the plan is completely silent. No assurance is given that the UN would not again find itself embroiled in "nation-building" fiascos of the kinds we saw in Cambodia and Somalia.

The reform plan was also silent on another issue high on the American agenda—the U.S. assessment. A bit of background: although the share of the general UN budget paid by the United States has been reduced—from 39.9 per cent in 1992 to 25 per cent today—there are some 79 members that each pay 0.01 per cent of the budget. Another 17 members each chip in 0.02 per cent. This means that a majority of the 185 voting members taken together contribute scarcely more than 1 per cent of the budget, while 14 members contribute 84 per cent. And although Congress insists on reducing the American assessment to 20 per cent, little help can be expected from Mr. Annan, who says that reductions "will depend on the creativity and persuasive abilities of the U.S. Government." He also supports reducing Third World countries' assessments yet further. Power and purse remain disconnected, which is critical to the central issue of controlling waste and mismanagement.

Why so little genuine reform? The answer is twofold. First, Kofi Annan is sympathetic to both the UN bureaucrats and the Third World delegates to the General Assembly who form his power base. All of them see reform as a code word for ceasing the lucrative transfer of resources from the developed to the developing world. Second, the Secretary General calculates that resistance in Congress is dissipating; he believes that Jesse Helms, Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, is growing isolated in his resistance. Annan also believes that the Administration has an increased stake in his success. He makes a chicken-and-egg argument: reform cannot proceed until the organization is on a firm financial footing—and that will not be the case until U.S. dues have been paid.



Frederick H. Carlson

WHAT to do? First, Congress should reject the muddy precedent set by Clinton and Annan. Payment of past dues should hinge on tangible reform in four categories: a reduced bureaucracy; reduced salaries and perks for those who remain; the creation of an Inspector General independent of the Secretary General; and a shift in priorities to humanitarian and assistance programs, not military intervention. Progress on these issues should precede any congressional authorization of dues payments—which in any case should be partially offset by credits for costs the United States has borne in UN-mandated peacekeeping operations.

But Congress cannot expect much help from the Clinton Administration, which has put so many of its eggs in Mr. Annan's basket. Rather than resisting the aggrandizement of the United Nations, as other recent Administrations have done, the Clinton team welcomes it, believing the UN to be an instrument of U.S. policy. Or is it the other way around? □

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Spoiled Rotten

Last year's child health-care legislation was supposed to create opportunities for free-market policy innovation. Guess what?

JOHN HOOD

As part of the 1997 budget deal with President Clinton, Republicans passed the so-called KidCare bill to provide federal support for children's health insurance at the state level. An amalgam of proposals introduced by Sens. Tom Daschle (D., N.D.), Arlen Specter (R., Pa.), and the tag team of Orrin Hatch (R., Utah) and Ted Kennedy (D., Mass.), the final bill (officially called the State Children's Health Insurance Program, or S-CHIP) authorized $48 billion over the next ten years in federal grants to states.

Because most poor children were already eligible for Medicaid, KidCare seemed just a way to expand government-provided health insurance to middle-income working families and thus a substantial defeat for conservatives. But Republican defenders of the budget deal put a positive spin on KidCare, insisting that, unlike previous entitlement programs, it allowed tremendous flexibility at the state level and could be used to fund relatively free-market conservative ideas such as vouchers, tax credits, and Medical Savings Accounts.

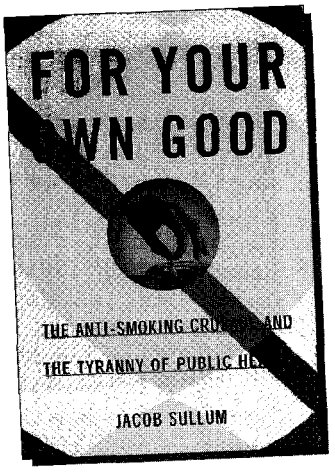
In November, the House Commerce Committee, headed by Rep. Tom Bliley (R., Va.), published an "implementation guide" for state officials along these lines: "S-CHIP provides states the resources, flexibility, and tools they need to expand the provision of coverage and services to uninsured low-income children," the committee staff wrote. Making the best of a bad situation, free-market advocacy groups such as the Heritage Foundation, the State Policy Network (of which my organization is a member), the American Legislative Exchange Council, and the Council for Affordable Health Insurance promoted market-friendly uses of the S-CHIP money.

Now that states are actually applying for their federal grants, it is clear that we needn't have bothered. The wording of the KidCare legislation itself—and its interpretation by the Clinton Administration—leaves almost no room for states to use S-CHIP money to experiment with free-market reforms. As of the end of January, according to information from the National Conference of State Legislatures and the (exultant) Children's Defense Fund, the vast majority of states have decided to use KidCare dollars for either 1) expansion of their Medicaid programs, 2) creation or expansion of separate state-run health-insurance programs, or 3) a little of both.

So much for innovation. While there

Mr. Hood is president of the John Locke Foundation, a state-policy think tank based in Raleigh, North Carolina.

"I'd walk a mile for this book."*



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will be some tightly restricted involvement by private insurers in some states, only two states that I am aware of—Maryland and North Carolina—are seriously entertaining the notion of giving families tax credits to buy their own conventional insurance or, better yet, Medical Savings Accounts, with their greater flexibility. So KidCare, a supposed GOP policy victory or at least a draw, is turning out to be nothing more than another expansion of the Great Society into the middle class.

KidCare is turning out to be nothing more than another expansion of the Great Society.

Why are states unwilling to use the "resources, flexibility, and tools" that Congress gave them to create tax credits or MSAs? Because Congress didn't. Despite the rhetoric, the bill was written in such a way as to thwart market-friendly ideas—surely the intention of the Kennedy staffers and Administration wonks who played such a big part in drafting it. Consider some of the implications of the bill's details.

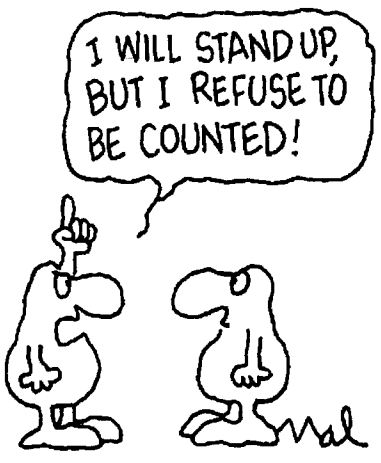
The Crowd-Out Conundrum. One of the great trade-offs in subsidizing health insurance for uninsured children of modest means is that the policy must, inevitably, be either unfair or extremely expensive. Consider two families of four making $28,000 a year. The Smiths have been paying monthly premiums to purchase dependent coverage for their two children from an employer plan. The Joneses, because of the price tag or for some other reason, have not.

A government program that pays all or most of the cost of covering uninsured children must either 1) enroll the Jones family but not the Smith family, thus punishing the Smiths for making earlier sacrifices for their children's health, or 2) extend KidCare to the Smiths as well, thus making taxpayers pay to cover kids who already had health insurance. In the latter case, the real cost of covering uninsured children would be very high, because it would include the cost of covering many insured children, too.

KidCare's promoters try to make it seem as if the program helps the Smiths, when in reality it is stacked against them. According to rules issued by President Clinton's Health Care Financing Administration (HCFA), states that elect to use S-CHIP dollars to help families buy into their employer's dependent coverage must impose a six-month waiting period, during which the children cannot be enrolled in the employer plan. But for states that offer Medicaid or other government insurance to these families, there is no federal time limit (although some states plan to impose one of their own). The practical effect is to deter states from using KidCare to help workers buy private health insurance.

The Cost-Sharing Clause. For a lot of the families eligible for KidCare—those whose incomes are no more than 50 per cent above the poverty line—the legislation restricts enrollment fees, premiums, deductibles, and co-payments to very low levels: essentially, the same nominal levels of so-called cost-sharing allowed in the Medicaid program. For example, co-payments for doctor visits or other services—often 20 per cent or more in private plans—can be only about 6 per cent, according to the HCFA's rules. Few private health plans will want to participate when co-payments and deductibles are so low because of the lack of disincentives for people to use unnecessary medical services.

For families with incomes above 150 per cent of the poverty line, the cost-sharing rules are less strict. Even so, a year's total fees cannot exceed 5 per cent of family income—and that is true regardless of the number of enrolled children in the family. This would complicate a state's request to use S-CHIP dollars to fund Medical Savings Accounts (if any state had had the intention of doing so) because withdrawals from MSAs to pay for children's routine medical bills would have to be treated as cost-sharing and would thus be strictly limited by the Federal Government.



Again, the practical effect of these rules is not just to quash market-based reforms, but to limit personal responsibility in general. In the states that plan to charge some families to enroll in KidCare, the premiums are likely to be extremely low. And many states aren't planning to charge premiums at all. The result: solidly middle-income families will be offered generous health insurance for free, or nearly so.

The Public-Employee Trick. Just in case a few states might figure out a way around some of these barriers, the people who drafted KidCare threw in an extra hurdle: states that create their own insurance programs are not allowed to use S-CHIP dollars to cover children of state employees, local employees, teachers, or other workers who are eligible for family coverage from a public-sector employer. Conveniently, this rule does not apply if states choose instead to expand Medicaid. This is yet another provision tipping the balance in favor of expanding the welfare state.

SO, in the end, the effect of KidCare will be what skeptics said at the outset: the growth of Medicaid and other forms of government-run health care (funded, in many states, with new cigarette taxes and the windfall from state settlements with the tobacco companies). This need not have been the case. Two factors make children's health insurance unnecessarily expensive: the existence of costly state insurance mandates and the unfairness of the federal tax code, which exempts employer-provided dependent coverage from taxation, while taxing the dollars families spend to buy their own insurance or services.

Congress could have 1) extended to small businesses and individuals the protection against state mandates that decades-old federal laws already give to large, self-insured firms; and 2) created tax credits to offset income and payroll taxes on insurance premiums and MSA deposits paid by individuals. These policies would have allowed families to take care of their own needs by protecting the private health-insurance market. Instead, congressional Republicans got snookered by a skilled team of liberal officials and interest groups who, unlike them, know exactly what they ultimately want: universal government-run health insurance. Now they are one step closer. □

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Pitched Battle

With a new book on trade policy, Patrick J. Buchanan is still urging his "peasants with pitchforks" to storm the castles of the GOP establishment and to pull up the drawbridge against the global economy. Herewith, three looks at the mind of his new "conservatism of the heart."

The Great Betrayal

ROBERT BARTLEY

THE initial manifesto of NATIONAL REVIEW famously declared that its posture would be that it "stands athwart history, yelling Stop." In 1989 history stopped, with the fall of the Berlin Wall and the collapse of Soviet Communism.

The fall of the Communist empire is surely a testimony to the foresight of William F. Buckley Jr., and also to the conservative coalition he and his magazine played so large a role in forming. This coalition united the Robert Taft heartland conservatives with Catholic intellectuals and with Jewish anti-Communists; its ranks were later swollen by neo-conservatives reacting against the anti-intellectual counterculture of the 1960s. This "conservative movement," anything but isolationist, brought itself together in opposition to the strategic, economic, and above all moral threat of atheistic Marxism. In 1980, Ronald Reagan became its spokesman and embodiment.

The 1989 triumph showed, however, that success can be dangerous, for it deprived the coalition of its clearest unifying mission. The movement started to suffer an identity crisis, with libertarian economists, religious evangelists, and assorted political opportunists all asserting their claims to the name. In this milieu it was probably inevitable that the old nativist and isolationist Right would test its strength. The genial and articulate Patrick J. Buchanan, with conservative roots in the Reagan and Nixon White Houses, offered himself as its presidential candidate.

Pat Buchanan by Roman Genn

The Republican Party did not prove all that hospitable, however. While making a lot of noise with the help of a press that delights in stigmatizing the GOP as know-nothings, Mr. Buchanan's two campaigns both peaked with the New Hampshire primary. Now he's back, with a new manifesto, if not indeed a new political alignment.

The Great Betrayal: How American Sovereignty and Social Justice Are Being Sacrificed to the Gods of the Global Economy (Little, Brown, 384 pp., $22.95) lays out the latest Buchanan program. The political coalition that elected Ronald Reagan "is shattered," Mr. Buchanan declares. "[T]he new conflict of the age that succeeds the Cold War" does not involve Republican versus Democrat, nor presumably conservative versus liberal. Rather, "Within both parties, nationalists are now in rancorous conflict with the globalists."

Mr. Buchanan aims to rally the post–cold-war "nationalists" and to forge a new political coalition. The mainstay of the "nationalist" cause is clear enough, and it would surely astonish the Presidents for whom Mr. Buchanan worked, not to mention the author of the Taft–Hartley Act. His first chapter, carrying on about income inequality and wage stagnation, reads as if it had strayed out of a book by Robert McIntyre of Citizens for Tax Justice. In Chapter 2, we're treated to a table showing that free trade cost the United Steelworkers 505,000 members, the Garment Workers 171,000 members, and the United Automobile Workers 134,000 members. The AFL-CIO's John Sweeney is quoted praising Mr. Buchanan, who in return adopts the former's slogan: "America Needs a Raise."

From this launching pad we're given a tendentious history of U.S. tariff policy. Alexander Hamilton protected

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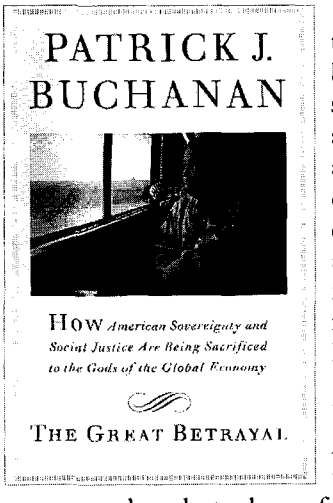
infant industries. Lincoln was elected on a protectionist platform, but betrayed the cause by never mentioning it afterward. The tariff, which protected domestic Northern manufacturing at the expense of Southern agricultural exports, did a lot to cause the Civil War (though Mr. Buchanan does not draw the lesson that a tariff is always a tax on one domestic interest to favor another). The era of free trade dawned not, say, with the original General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade in 1948, but with the completion of the Kennedy round in 1967. This is news to me, but it makes for a lot of scary charts that I would attribute instead to the 1971–73 breakdown of the Bretton Woods international monetary system.

Mr. Buchanan proposes to stand athwart not only the march of Communism but also powerful trends driven by the information revolution.

We're told it is a "myth" that the Smoot–Hawley tariff had anything to do with the Great Depression. But changes in American sugar tariffs in 1893 did "change the course of world history" by sparking a revolution against Spain in Cuba and ultimately provoking American intervention: "Had there been no Spanish–American War, the United States would not have annexed the Philippines and so might have avoided its future war with Japan."

As for economics, workers and businesses should not be "sacrificed to an abstraction" such as David Ricardo's law of comparative advantage or Adam Smith's division of labor. Now, Mr. Buchanan doesn't get comparative advantage quite right, but never mind. It surely is the principal argument for free trade, since a larger trading system allows income-building specialization (and efficiency-building competition) to be spread over a larger area. Economists—for example, Ludwig von Mises—feel this idea has been tested by two centuries of experience. Mr. Buchanan says they've been infected by a "utopian virus" akin to Marxism. "As Christianity lost its hold on the intelligentsia, free-trade ideology took on the aspect of a messianic faith. Held to the heart, pursued with perseverance, the doctrine must bring us to paradise." Wow. If Scientology can qualify as a religion, why not the Von Mises Institute?


PATRICK J.
BUCHANAN
How American Sovereignty and Social Justice Are Being Sacrificed to the Gods of the Global Economy
THE GREAT BETRAYAL

The true believers in this utopian religion are people like, well, me. Indeed, I'm quoted on open immigration, an ideal we at the *Wall Street Journal* think is worth keeping alive whatever the practical difficulties; after all, America is a nation-state united not by ethnicity but by truths we assert to be self-evident. Second and more to the point, I am quoted as saying that "the nation-state is finished." These words have never appeared in the *Journal*; at most I seem to have let Mr. Buchanan's fellow "nationalist" Peter Brimelow put this hyperbolic phrase in my mouth. It bears only a passing resemblance to my views. To wit, with no global military threat to call forth huge armies, and with instant communications and 24-hour financial markets precluding an independent monetary policy, the state will play a smaller role in our lives, markets will play a greater one, and this is a good thing.

This normative conclusion is, I take it, the crux of the argument. Mr. Buchanan would not argue with the description, but thinks it's a bad thing. So bad, indeed, that it needs to be cured by higher tariffs, which is to say, a tax increase. And this tax is explicitly intended to transfer income from some classes of citizens, namely those whose skills put them in "the global elite," to others he considers more worthy, namely steelworkers, autoworkers, and so on. This is to be done, of course, in the name of "sovereignty" and the "nation-state."

Now here is an ancient argument, though the terms to describe the contending parties have changed over the centuries. There was a time when adherents of the state were called Tories, while defenders of the individual were called Whigs. The Tories survived in name by stealing the Whigs' individualistic clothes, and in this century the party of big government has been socialists and quasi-socialists, intellectuals seeking power on the back of the "workingman." The cause of the individual and the marketplace has been defended by, say, Friedrich von Hayek warning about the road to serfdom, or Ronald Reagan saying a government big enough to fill all your needs would be big enough to take all your freedom.

In our time, that is, smaller government is the essence of what we call conservatism. To be sure, a full-bodied conservatism of this stripe has always included other powerful strains. A strong national defense, certainly, and its accompanying patriotism. Suspicion concerning stark rationalism and respect for experience and tradition. And especially the affirmation of a firm moral foundation, if not indeed religious faith. These different currents were brilliantly united under President Reagan's savvy leadership.

Within conservatism, a degree of heresy can be allowed, as with textile magnate Roger Milliken, Mr. Buchanan's protectionist mentor and political patron. In making the intellectual case for protectionism, Mr. Buchanan borrows (or parodies) some strains of conservatism, preaching distrust of theory, even a theory tested over two hundred years, and thumping the drum for a kind of tribal solidarity in the name of "sovereignty."

We globalists view this as a rejection of modernity. Mr. Buchanan proposes to stand athwart not only the march of Communism, but also powerful trends driven by the information revolution. With 24-hour markets and capital circling the globe at the speed of light, there is no real economic alternative to learning to live with a shrinking world and a constantly accelerating pace of change. Attempts to dam up change bear heavy costs—in the case of Mr. Buchanan's protectionism, in undermining the value of the

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very skills that make America the leader of the global economic revolution.

Economically, the trick is to make the trend your friend, to play to your natural strengths. Mr. Buchanan's laments are poorly timed, coming as they do just when the open American economy he bemoans has become the wonder of the world, especially in job creation. The wages of low-paid workers even reversed their long-standing decline in 1997; a strong enough tide does lift all boats.

Politically, it's difficult to see what Mr. Buchanan's platform has to do with conservatism, except perhaps in the sense that Mr. Sweeney's AFL-CIO is the most reactionary force in American politics today. This is not exactly how conservatism has been understood in the NATIONAL REVIEW era. Whittaker Chambers was entitled to change his mind, of course, and so is Pat Buchanan, who describes how he was once a free-trader second only to "the guy down the hall"—that is, President Reagan. But before conservatives follow him in jettisoning the free market, they should look carefully at the others marching behind his banner, and think hard about where their parade is headed in terms of the broader movements of politics.

Not anywhere dear to conservatives' hearts, I should think. Their best bet is to keep trying to hold the Reagan coalition together. I even doubt that Mr. Buchanan's defection will be as big a problem as the unbridled libertarianism that predominates in Silicon Valley and on the Internet; its adherents need to be persuaded that the free market rests on the rule of law, which in turn rests on a moral foundation. But for all the pains of success, conservatism remains the party of ideas in America today.

To take but one example, libertarians and traditionalists are married blissfully in the school-voucher movement. Though opposed by Mr. Sweeney's AFL-CIO, not to mention the sovereignty momentarily embodied in Bill Clinton, this idea shows promise of reshaping American life. With luck, the religious will be allowed to pray in school, educational performance will improve even as costs decline, and students in the likes of downtown Milwaukee will have the skills to rise in the, yes, global economy. But Pat Buchanan will complain that the National Education Association has lost jobs. □

Pat Answers

RAMESH PONNURU

'NEITHER the frettings of our foundation-fed scholars nor the fulminations of our imperial press can change reality: The West is receding as a world force; it has been receding since the great bloodbath of 1914–1918. And, now, the American Century is almost over. Nor need we be morose at the prospect. No nation is less threatened in this new world than America, none better positioned to prosper and grow great. . . . Happy New Year!" Thus did Patrick J. Buchanan, columnist *cum* candidate, ring in 1994.

In *Suicide of the West*, James Burnham diagnosed midcentury liberalism as a pathology that rationalized each fresh defeat for the West as an advance. In the Nineties, Buchanan seems to be making defeats of advances: after all, Western culture has, for good and for ill, penetrated so many lands that the sun never sets on it. What he shares with the liberals of yesteryear is an odd mix of declinism and complacency.

He displayed both tendencies in the run-up to the Gulf War. We lacked the will to do the job, he said. Furthermore, the "Arab masses" sided with Saddam Hussein, who would therefore inevitably triumph; Arab nationalism and Islamic fundamentalism were unstoppable "elemental tides"; intervention would only rile those masses and swell those tides. At the same time, he argued, there wasn't really much to worry about anyway: Iraq would still have to sell us oil; Saddam Hussein was just a "Baghdad bandit," not a Hitler; Mutual Assured Destruction would protect us from any Iraqi nuclear weapons; and we could always fight if Iraq invaded Saudi Arabia. (Why Saudi Arabia but not Kuwait was worth defending, and how it would be easier to fight an enemy granted more time, more resources, and momentum, Buchanan's numerous columns did not address.)

An embargo would backfire, he warned; two weeks later, Buchanan wrote that we should see if it works before doing anything more. After the bombing began, he explained that an Allied victory would lead only to resentment, and that a ground war or a demand for Hussein's removal could "be the trigger that ignites the Arab world." A war-crimes trial would—come on, guess—set "millions of Arabs and Muslims" against us. Two years later, he explained that the war had "dealt a lethal blow to Arab nationalism" but thus cleared the field for an even more dangerous Islamic fundamentalism. The U.S. couldn't win even when it won, and wouldn't lose even if it let Iraq win.

SINCE then, Buchanan has carved out a distinctive foreign-policy doctrine which he calls "nationalist" rather than "isolationist" (he did, after all, urge intervention on behalf of Croatia, "a Western republic"). Buchanan rejects the wimpy Wilsonianism of the Clinton Administration and the muscular Wilsonianism of some neoconservatives. He understands that, as John Roche once remarked, the world is not made of Play-Doh. He worries about the mismatch between our growing international commitments and our declining willingness to deploy resources to back them. But his alternative is so flawed that it gives One Worldism a credibility it does not deserve. Its main tenet, applied everywhere from Iraq to North Korea: If a threat isn't too small to bother with, it's too big to risk fighting, and sometimes it's both.

"In this post–cold-war world, we are going to find that we, too, though we may be the last superpower on Earth, cannot stop the tides of history, bloody though they may be, from running their appointed course," wrote Buchanan in a column on Bosnia. This is not the Buchanan we once

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knew. All through the cold war, he rejected such notions of historical inevitability. In the old days, he thought the Soviets would interpret conciliatory moves as weakness; we could help Kremlin doves only by shooting down hawks. Now that Russia is weaker, it's imperative not to provoke her nationalists by expanding NATO. Likewise, lifting the arms embargo on Bosnia would only anger the Serbs.

When it comes to trade, Buchanan insists that the nation-state wield its sword like King Canute against global economic tides.

When it comes to trade, however, Buchanan insists that the nation-state wield its sword like King Canute against global economic tides. He would slap 15 per cent tariffs on imports from every country in the world except possibly Canada and impose steep "wage-equalization" tariffs on countries with the bad manners to be poor. He would systematically dismantle the institutions that have undergirded the West's postwar prosperity, withdrawing from the World Trade Organization and restoring the pork-barrel protectionism that characterized his "Golden Age" (which he dates from 1865 to 1913, though the policies stayed in place through the 1930s).

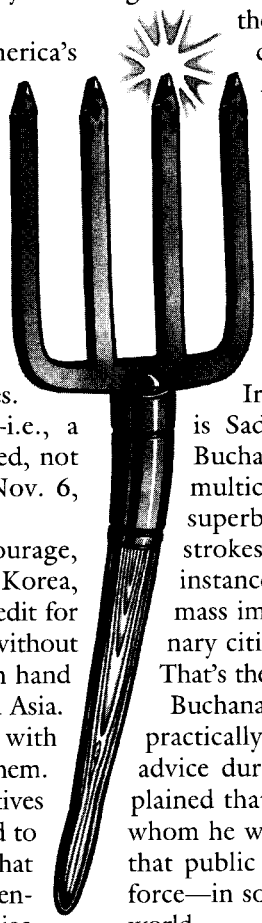
Buchanan argues that tariffs would reduce America's dependence on other countries for vital needs like food and weapons. This concern is overblown. Having multiple sources for a product provides more security than having one; and if ever America goes to war without a single ally capable of fortifying us, supply shortages will be the least of our worries. Moreover, in the unlikely event that Buchanan's plan worked, it would leave the Federal Government directly dependent on foreign trade for its revenues. A country that broke off trade relations with us could also imperil our government's finances. "Sovereignty" as understood by Buchananites—i.e., a nation-state's freedom of action—would be reduced, not increased (see "Fair Trade, Foul Politics," *NR*, Nov. 6, 1995, for historical examples).

Buchanan wants America to tolerate, even encourage, nuclear proliferation in Iraq, North Korea, South Korea, Japan, Taiwan, Australia, and Ukraine. Give him credit for consistency: non-proliferation cannot be enforced without security guarantees, and so this policy goes hand in hand with his desire to withdraw troops from Europe and Asia. Harder to fathom is the logic of arming our allies with nuclear weapons and then starting trade wars with them.

It has lately become fashionable among conservatives to ridicule the claim that freedom is somehow linked to trade and peace. And it's true, as Buchanan notes, that present-day corporate hacks share with nineteenth-century classical liberals a tendency toward utopian projections, arguing that free trade is a sufficient condition for "world peace." But that doesn't mean there is no connection. Buchanan's "Golden Age," after all, coincided with the shift from republic to empire. Our Mideast allies in the Gulf War were those regimes with large investment portfolios in the West, our opponents those which had reinvested their oil profits at home (usually in their militaries). And it stands to reason that people who succumb to whipped-up hysteria about foreigners ruining their livelihoods will turn more aggressive.

You don't have to be an economic determinist to think that in the broad sweep of history trade has been a civilizing, liberalizing, enriching, and thus pacifying force. Buchanan himself, in *The Great Betrayal*, documents how British mercantilism drove the American colonies to rebellion, and alleges that Northern protectionism did the same to the South, without ever drawing the obvious conclusion, that trade wars can indeed lead to deadlier ones. (In fact, Northern protectionism was one factor that led Britain to contemplate intervention on the South's behalf.) Buchanan, indeed, argues a strong version of the commerce-spreads-bonds-of-peace argument, saying that therefore Americans should trade among ourselves to bind us together as a nation.

Besides, Buchanan's cultural determinism can be at least as dangerous as economic determinism. He regards self-proclaimed nationalist or religious movements—the Ba'athist regime in Iraq, Islamicism—as organic cultural outgrowths deserving grudging tolerance. But in many cases they are modern ideological, indeed totalitarian, constructs. It was an intellectual theorist, Michel 'Aflaq, who mixed and matched elements of Communism and Fascism to create Ba'athism. Traditional autocracies don't force children to inform on their parents, as Iraq does, or create networks of terror as extensive as those described in Iraqi defector Kanan Makiya's *Republic of Fear*. Iran is no caliphate, and Saddam is no Saladin.



But Buchanan takes dictators' claims to represent their people at face value. If Patricia Ireland doesn't speak for American women, why is Saddam Hussein an Arab man of the people? Buchanan has become a cultural relativist, a global multiculturalist. As Richard Nadler writes in his superb self-published *The Perils of Pat*: "Different strokes for different folks, says Pat. Arabs, for instance, adore dictators who gas villagers, practice mass impressment for suicidal wars, and torture ordinary citizens with the apparatus of a police state. . . . That's their *culture*."

Buchanan's foreign policy is, like his economic policy, practically guaranteed to lead to disaster. Consider his advice during our latest Iraq troubles. Again he complained that our allies are shirking—the same allies with whom he wants us to start trade wars. Again he worried that public opinion might turn against us at a show of force—in some of the most repressive police states in the world.

Mr. Buchanan insists that Americans should base their foreign policy on the national interest and reject the woolly advice of a complacent elite. I couldn't agree more. □

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Nationalist Anthem

JOHN O'SULLIVAN

NO one knows how many Republicans will run for the Presidency in 2000. In *The Almanac of American Politics*, Michael Barone lists 27 "plausible" GOP contenders. At that, he may have missed a few. But there is near unanimity about who will not be running.

Leading Republicans assure each other (and passersby) that Pat Buchanan will definitely not throw his black hat into the ring. Pat is a spent force. Out of the mainstream. Others are stealing his constituency. He would have to give up a pundit's pleasant life. For what? It makes no sense. Give me a break; give me a rest; give me an Alka Seltzer.

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That
is doubly appealing when, as at present, the national GOP is disappointing its main constituencies. Economic conservatives despair when the GOP, confronted by a budget surplus, decides that the responsible course is not to cut taxes. Social conservatives complain that the only brave moral stand the GOP has taken recently is against infanticide—and that neither unanimously nor loudly. And nationalist conservatives lament that the GOP leadership, far from resisting a balkanized America, actually promotes it with plans to expand immigration and a do-nothing approach to racial preferences and the spread of bilingualism.

Conventional wisdom says Republicans are spooked by Bill Clinton. Beaten over the government shutdown, they are determined never to wag their face in his fist again. No doubt this is part of the truth. But there is a deeper reason for their timidity: they have no idea what to do.

When the cold war ended, the main domestic division of politics—statism versus the market—ended with it. Everywhere the Left moved swiftly to forge a new politics for this new world. New Democrats, New Labour, and "post-Communist" parties emerged smiling from the ideological rubble of the Old Liberal-Left, singing that they now accepted the market but would regulate it more compassionately than conservatives. That has been a winning formula. Conservative parties have been reduced to playground complaints: it's not fair; we won really; they stole our policies—which, as the British MP David Willetts observes drily, would win a competition for the least frightening things to say about one's political opponents.

The GOP, like other conservative parties, has yet to forge its own new formula. Oh, to be sure, it has laundry lists of desirable policies—magnet schools, workfare, Social Security reform—but it has no general defining political attitude that can be captured in an appealing slogan such as "Efficiency with Compassion"—or indeed "America First."

To forge that, it must first overcome a new division on the Right. Not the division between economic and social conservatives—a permanent and manageable tension on the Right—but that between nationalists and post-nationalists.

ALL conservative parties are instinctively nationalist but they have had little difficulty reconciling their nationalism with international commitments. They preserved national sovereignty and democratic accountability (the same thing in a democratic polity, as John Fonte points out) by subordinating international treaties to national law. Thus, they made only specific and limited treaty commitments; they stipulated that treaties had to be ratified by national legislatures, sometimes by super-majorities; they refused to sign treaties that had no provision for abrogation; and so on. Such requirements rest on the belief that the nation-state is both the principal focus of every citizen's political allegiance and the main building block of international life. So conservatives like Ronald Reagan and Margaret Thatcher could be nationalists and internationalists simultaneously.

Post-nationalism is something else entirely. It is the assertion that the nation-state is now an outmoded institution, economically eroded by the trade and capital movements of the global market, politically undercut by the rise

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of regionalism, local nationalisms, and "international civil society" represented by the UN, and culturally moribund in an age when mass migration and multiculturalism have made any cut-and-dried concept of nations with borders seem as dated as the turkey trot or the frock coat. Unsurprisingly, post-nationalism has little support among voters, especially conservative voters, in successful nation-states like the U.S. or France. It is a religion of the New Class elites. Which means that post-nationalism has some followers in conservative elites, notably in business elites and in the GOP leadership. Whether or not Robert Bartley believes that "the nation-state is finished"—see his gloss on the question (page 42)—that is certainly the view of some economic conservatives.

Pat Buchanan is drawn to support protectionism because he fiercely intuits that free trade is the economic road to post-nationalism.

Yet even there post-nationalism is less a conscious doctrine than an uneasy notion that a global free market is irresistibly rendering all things new, and that we must adapt by becoming, well, less national. Hence, Republican policies, though inspired by post-nationalism only occasionally (higher immigration quotas, Puerto Rican statehood) or seemingly (NAFTA), are often crippled by it (the reluctance to oppose multiculturalism and bilingualism.)

The results of such politics can be seen most starkly abroad. Most mainstream conservative parties have avoided nationalist or cultural issues and stuck nervously to economic ones. Not only are they now mostly out of power, but in addition they face a permanent drain of votes to new parties of nationalist protest on their right. As *NR* pointed out last year, this has happened in France, Italy, Denmark, and Austria. In Canada, the Progressive Conservatives have actually been replaced by the right-wing Reform as the official Opposition. An especially topical warning is France, where the mainstream Right's timidity on such topics as immigration, crime, and France's identity within Europe has led to the rise of the extremely nasty National Front. It is now the largest party on the Right, and in the recent elections President Chirac had to beg his party to elect Socialists rather than form an alliance with the Front. Getting into such straits is neither statesmanlike nor smart.

American conservatism is drifting into a similar impasse. The GOP leadership is still pretty hostile to post-nationalism on issues like the U.S. debt to the UN, but it is actively post-nationalist on immigration and passively so on language and cultural issues. Overall, the party comes off looking confused. Not so Pat Buchanan, who is clearly, vigorously, and wittily hostile to the Beast in all its guises. Having just published his lively polemic against free trade, *The Great Betrayal*, he is finishing another on foreign policy. He plans to emphasize the multicultural weakening of American citizenship in future speeches and columns—starting with his recent piece on an anti-American riot against the U.S. soccer team in Los Angeles. And his ideas are gaining ground with the grass-roots and even—as the defeat of "fast-track" showed—inside the Beltway.

But any conservative civil war would be based on a simple mistake. Both sides treat the post-nationalism package—globalization, free trade, open immigration, loss of national sovereignty to the UN, multiculturalism, bilingualism, regionalism, etc.—as if it were a consistently logical whole. In fact it yokes together ideas and policies which in the real world have no necessary connection to one another. And free trade is the least necessary—and most confusing—item in the mix. Republicans are tempted toward post-nationalism as a whole because they feel dimly that it is implied by the logic of free trade; Pat Buchanan is drawn to support protectionism because he fiercely intuits that free trade is the economic road to post-nationalism. Yet there are no necessities here. Ronald Reagan was a free-trade nationalist; ditto Margaret Thatcher, who added immigration control to the mix; and Britain's Pat Buchanan, the late Enoch Powell, who was notorious for both nationalism and razor-sharp logic, rejected every item in the post-nationalist package *except* for free trade.

Both sides are led by their error into political quicksands. Buchanan's protectionism divides even stalwart conservatives. It makes him the ally of John Sweeney's unions, which are organizing the public-sector workforce on multicultural lines. It puts him in opposition to almost the entire economics profession. And as even sympathetic reviews of his book show (e.g., Peter Brimelow's in *The American Spectator*), it opens him up to fierce attack and embroils him in arcane disputes. In reply to Brimelow's argument that flexible exchange rates partly offset tariffs, Buchanan suggests a tariff that would vary inversely to exchange-rate fluctuations. That is the economics of a cat chasing its tail, and in a campaign it could become a similar sort of politics.

AND for what? As George Borjas pointed out in *NR*, even the American worker's short-term gains from protectionism (there are no long-term gains) are small—far smaller than similar gains from less immigration. An American nationalism shorn of protectionism—educating American workers to compete in the global market, protecting them against wage competition from current immigration levels, and defending America's common culture (with its encouragement of enterprise) against balkanization—would be better national policy and a far stronger electoral card.

But not one that Republicans gripped by post-national malaise contemplate playing. Fearing to lose Hispanic votes, they shun initiatives such as Ron Unz's proposal to curb bilingual education—which is supported by most Hispanic voters. Faced with the relative failure of American children in international tests, they solve the problem by importing gifted foreigners. And like the French, Italian, Canadian, Danish, and Austrian conservative parties, they avoid controversial nationalist issues for economics.

In short, Pat Buchanan campaigns on a popular fallacy; and the Republicans respond with unpopular fallacies. After post-nationalism, what? Post-Republicanism, perhaps? □

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THE VICE PRESIDENT
WASHINGTON

March 27, 1998

Dear Bill,

Hey! Saw you on the news last night! Your trip to Africa seems to be going really well!

I got a shock last night, though. I was flipping through the channels and I caught a glimpse of you behind bars, smiling and waving. Boy, talk about spilling your herbal tea! Then I saw that you were with Nelson Mandela and that he was showing you around his old prison cell and I told myself, "Al," I said, "you've got to get a grip!" But for a moment there, I thought to myself, "Crystal ball city!"

So I thought I'd take this moment to write you a letter. That seems to be the best way for us to communicate these days! Actually, it's the only way, according to my attorneys. The problem is that anything you say to me may or may not be covered by executive privilege and may or may not be material evidence in a matter currently under investigation by federal prosecutors and therefore considered evidence per se.

Whew! Lawyer talk, huh?

The point is, I'm not sure I want to take time out from raising money and making important trips to New Hampshire to drive over to the Grand Jury room and answer a lot of silly questions. It's not vice presidential, you know what I mean?

Also, I've got the whole campaign-finance thing breathing down my neck, and people are starting to muddle the various investigations into one big soup. You know they're separate and I know they're separate, it's just that at the end of the day, all I did was make a few phone calls and accept the generosity of some nuns, while you, on the other hand, did . . . well, absolutely nothing, I believe you 100 per cent, those women are lying, etc., etc.

Still, let's be reasonable about this. It's in both our interests to disentangle these issues and move forward with our agenda, which at this point, speaking entirely for myself, is the raising of $4.7 million and putting the fear of God into Bob Kerrey and Dick Gephardt. I mean, I'm laying my cards on the table here. It's awfully hard to scare someone when you're racing down the steps of the courthouse into a limousine.

So let's call this the "Spiro Strategy." The goal here, obviously, is to keep me from being the guy who gets taken down on an entirely unrelated matter. Remember Spiro Agnew? The guy had nothing to do with Watergate. Absolutely nothing! What he did, apparently—and I'm not sure he really did anything wrong—was commit a few campaign-finance irregularities.

No one was really after him, of course. He was a popular guy. The press liked him. But they hated his boss, who was in some hot water himself although he continued to enjoy high poll numbers.

Does any of this sound familiar? I mean, I'll be honest—back here it's ringing a lot of bells!!

So how do we implement the "Spiro Strategy," you ask? The obvious way is for you to jump the gun a little and not wait until January 21, 2001, to move to Los Angeles. But you know and I know that that's not going to happen, and hey, I wouldn't respect you so much if it was. Okay, Plan B.

What I think the best thing to do—I mean for the both of us—is for you to just say, "What the heck, I'll tell you what you want to know," and just hash the whole thing out. Just come right out and tell the truth.

Of course, I know that you've already told the truth—and I believe you 100 per cent, those women are lying, etc., etc. Let me put it another way: I think the best thing for you to do is to tell the plausible truth. The sounds-right truth. The true truth.

Heck, you know what I mean. I'm getting all tied up in words here.

The "Spiro Strategy" would serve to "front burner" what we'll call the "you" stuff and "back burner" what we'll call the "me" stuff. The "you" stuff is so much more interesting, anyway. It's got romance, adventure, assault. The "me" stuff has, what? Long-distance rates and old women in saffron robes. Gimme a break, here. By the time anyone remembers the "me" stuff, I'll be the one behind the big desk in the Oval Office, making the big decisions, calling the important shots, issuing presidential pardons, that sort of thing.

What do you say?

Your pal, Al

P.S. "Pal" in this context connotes a purely social relationship. I am not now nor have I ever been a "confidant" or "fact finder" in any matter currently under federal investigation.

cc: Mr. Bob Bennett, Mr. Lloyd Cutler

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help!!!!

Steinem's Harassment Rule

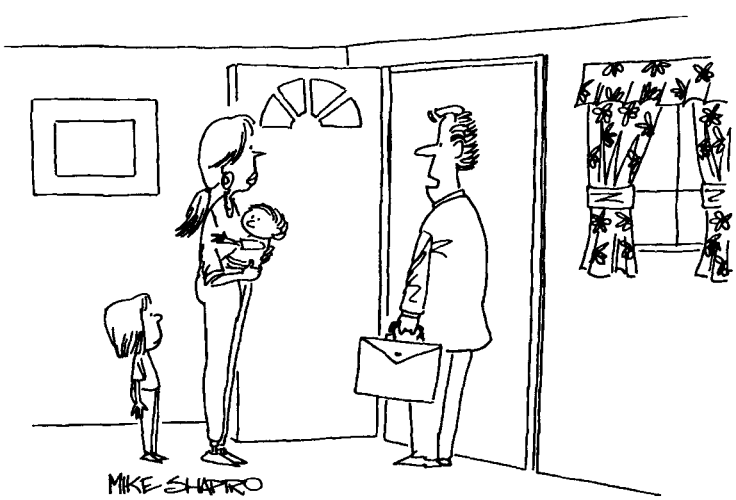
He can cop a feel in chairs
Or perform below the stairs
As he—casting stealth aside—
Lunges for the great divide,
Just as long as it's no-go
When she murmurs, "Darling, no."

—W. H. von Dreele

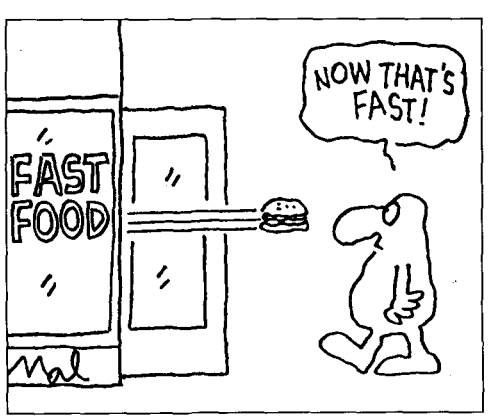
"Sims is our office Cal Ripken. Fifteen years without a raise, promotion, or sick day."

Matt-Rotheo

"It's 10 P.M. Do you know where the special prosecutor is?"



"Of course I love you and the kids more than I love my job. Didn't I send you a memo on that?"



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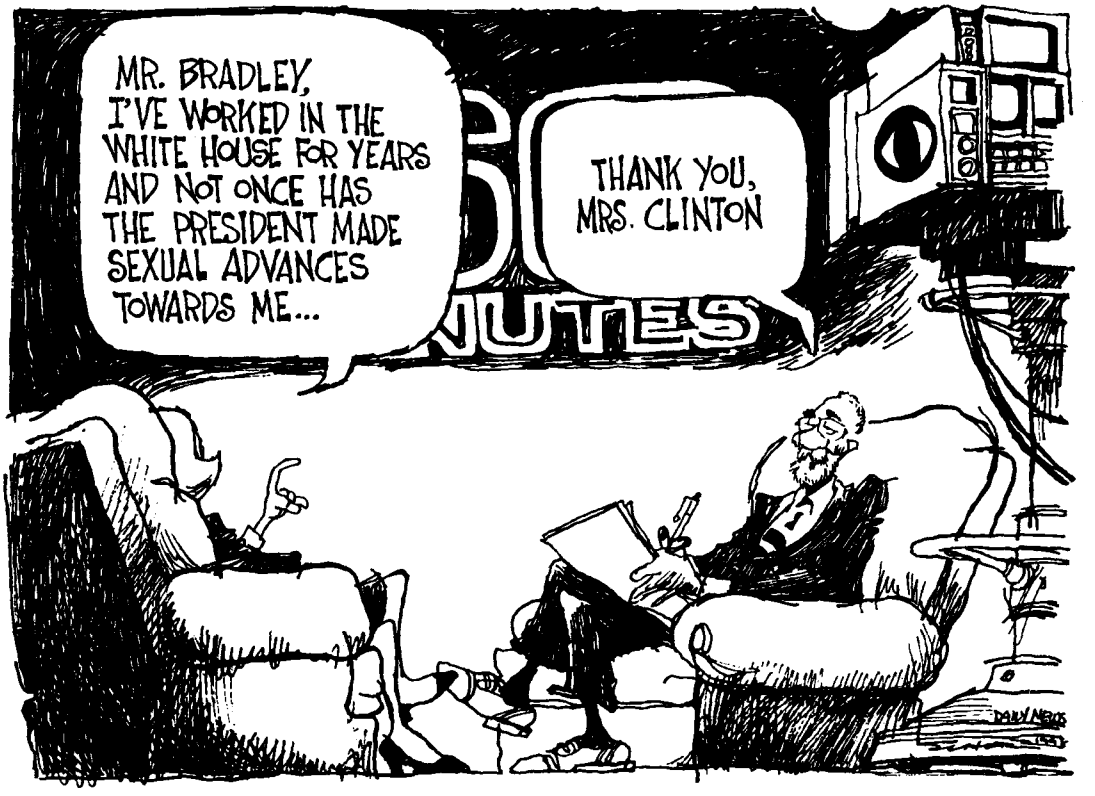
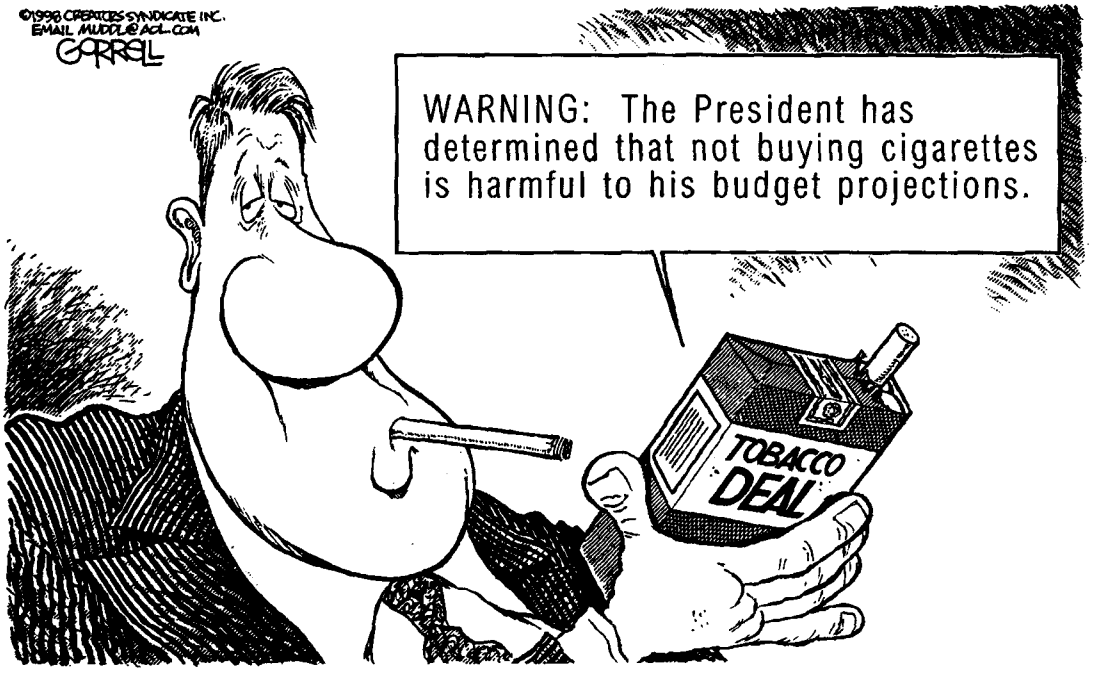

MR. BRADLEY, I'VE WORKED IN THE WHITE HOUSE FOR YEARS AND NOT ONCE HAS THE PRESIDENT MADE SEXUAL ADVANCES TOWARDS ME...
THANK YOU, MRS. CLINTON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BOOKS, ARTS & MANNERS

The California Dream

HAROLD JOHNSON

PLATO'S *Republic* opens with Socrates going "down to the Piraeus," the seaport of Athens, where commerce dilutes parochialism and allows expansive speculation—a place especially conducive to the dreaming and dissecting of utopias.

California—or the "California Republic," as its bear flag proclaims it—likewise sits at ocean's edge, and has imbibed through the centuries cosmopolitan influences that help make it a place apart, an island, as more than one writer has called it, in spirit and psyche, where dreams loom large.

And a place of endless fascination to cultural historians. Few have offered a more evocative chronicle than San Francisco journalist Stephen Schwartz. In this book he argues that a "borderland" dynamic is California's defining principle. From the sixteenth century onward, trade winds would carry seafarers not merely from the Spanish Empire, but also from England—whose Francis Drake christened Upper California "New Albion"—and later from Russia, in a foretaste of the modern West Coast's trading ties to the Orient.

From West to East: California and the Making of the American Mind, by Stephen Schwartz (Free Press, 542 pp., $30)

Invigorating interaction with other cultures would always help make California a "Child of Modernity." It came into the Union, in the mid nineteenth century, as nothing less, Schwartz contends. Unlike the other Western states and territories, it already had a consciousness fully formed, a distillation "of Indian and European hallucinations; of Bourbon reform, Franciscan millenarianism, and the Enlightenment; of English piracy and smuggling, Mexican federalism, and American commerce."

Rather than attempt a sweeping but superficial tableau, Schwartz keeps his historical focus narrow: reformist and socialist politics, the rise of organized labor, literary and artistic iconoclasts, and Communist machinations. This focus is useful in helping us to understand a state where flux has been a fixture, and radicalism an evolutionary force. "California was radical from the beginning," Schwartz argues. He sees harbingers of a restless, striving society in the fact that the early Spanish military authorities were not Castilian nobles but outsiders themselves, Catalan and Mallorcan soldiers and mariners with entrepreneurial vitality and a will to reinvent themselves on virgin terrain.

Roman Genn

A pioneering indulgence in utopianism—the first of many such experiments in the Golden State—could be found in the "planned society" of Branciforte, near the Mission of Santa Cruz, beginning in 1795. Intensively organized into orders of craftsmen, farmers, and building workers, with housing that was cleaner and more spacious than in villages more haphazardly born, it foundered for uncertain reasons—a result that was prophetic, foretelling the limits of publicly sponsored communities.

Latter-day feminism, Schwartz suggests, can trace symbolic roots to the strong-willed Na Eulalia Callís, wife of an eighteenth-century military governor in Monterey, who broke convention by separating from her adulterous husband.

An enduring individualist ethic gained ground during the Gold Rush, when runaway sailors wielded pick and shovel alongside Easterners seeking a second chance, refugees from Midwestern farming or from European oppression, and escaped slaves.

That egalitarian ideal was tested with the rise of mass employment in the service of concentrated capital. Schwartz records the coming of the railroad and the growth of waterfront commerce in San Francisco, and the simultaneous increase of allegiance to unions and of political dominance by industrial monopolists. Socialist aspirations in organized labor would join with a Protestant "good government" impulse among the middle class, yielding the reforms of the Progressive Era—the referendum and initiative—that would break the railroads' political power and have shaped the state's policies through recent decades in many unforeseen ways.

The aftermath of World War I brought reversals for radicals in the labor movement, but the collectivist temptation retained a broad appeal. Socialist Upton Sinclair captured 850,000 votes as Democratic nominee for governor in 1934—and might have won the election had the candidate of the socialist Common Wealth ticket, who got 300,000 votes, pulled out and endorsed him (the winner, Republican Frank F. Merriam, got 1.1 million votes). Four

Mr. Johnson is an editorial writer for the Orange County Register.

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years later Sinclair's political heir, Culbert Levy Olson, won the governorship, backed by the "Ham and Eggs" pension movement, which called for payments of "$30 Every Thursday." The movement's meetings "had a disturbingly totalitarian feel," writes Schwartz,

The Left was quiet during California's Japanese-internment episode—and Governor Earl Warren was loud in warning about the threat posed by American-born Japanese.

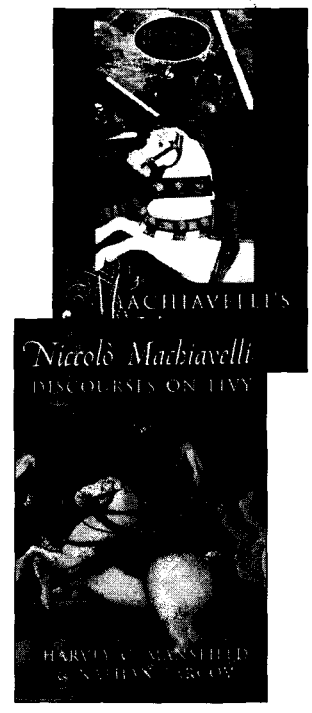
"with giant assemblies at which participants were required to shout out the phrase 'Ham and Eggs, Everybody!' before speaking."

In the shadows were the genuine Communists, who garnered adherents and forged alliances throughout the Depression years. They were a force to be reckoned with in California in labor, politics, and the arts until midway through the 1950s, with the final exposure of Stalin's crimes by his own heirs in the Kremlin.

Schwartz recounts compelling anecdotes illustrating the Communists' brutality in fighting to capture unions, and their nimble switch, when the Hitler–Stalin pact collapsed, from campaigning for "peace" to loud support of war against Germany. There is a chilling profile of the Russian intelligence agent whose code name was Kharon—or Charon, the boatman of mythology who ferried the dead into Hades. From the KGB's San Francisco base office, he coordinated West Coast Soviet intelligence activity during the war—particularly aimed at atomic research at Berkeley—and oversaw the kidnapping, for return to the homeland, of Soviet sailors who jumped ship in American ports.

The book's preface promises a "hidden" story of California, and it delivers with a wealth of information ignored or underreported in conventional histories. We are reminded, for instance, that the Left was largely silent during the Japanese internment episode—and that Gov-

Look Out, Ol' Mach's Back . . . in Paper



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—Hadley Arkes, *New Criterion*

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ernor Earl Warren was loud in warning about the wartime threat posed by American-born Japanese.

While at the Office of War Information in the early 1940s, the young Alan Cranston worked to distort news about the mass grave of Polish military officers discovered at Katyn, in German-occupied Russia. Forensic evidence suggested that the Soviets had murdered these captured officers, but Cranston muzzled a Polish-speaking Detroit commentator who so reported; according to Schwartz, Cranston suggested to the CIA's forerunner, the OSS, that the officers were not missing at all.

The existence of a Stalinist element in Hollywood is indicated in a manifesto defending the Moscow Purge trials. The 1937 statement asked: "Should not a country recognized as engaged in improving conditions for all its people . . . be permitted to decide for itself what measures of protection are necessary against treasonable plots . . . ?" Signers included screenwriters Nathanael West, Ring Lardner Jr., Samuel Ornitz, and Donald Ogden Stewart.

Schwartz notes widely overlooked testimony at the 1947 Hollywood hearings by the House Un-American Activities Committee, in which evidence was given suggesting that the really ominous threat to free thought did not lie with the anti-Communists. Ex-Communist author Oliver Carlson told the panel about the strange disappearance of one Eli Jacobson, who, Carlson said, had been sent from New York to Hollywood in 1936 to build up the Party "among the film folk." In 1938, Jacobson had told Carlson he was breaking with the Party. "He was terribly agitated and afraid he was going to be killed," the witness said. Jacobson was still alive at that time—but in 1952 he drowned in a slough in Marin County, under sinister circumstances.

Schwartz is at his most lyrical when he celebrates successive movements of California writers and artists who challenged convention and who exerted an influence beyond California's, and indeed the United States', borders—such people as San Francisco bohemian Philip Duncan, novelist Henry Miller, composer John Cage, and poet Kenneth Rexroth and the Beats he inspired.

To the degree they symbolize freedom, a refusal to be deadened by custom, such men embody the California spirit in its highest form, even if the value of some of their work can be debated. If there is a rambling quality to much of Schwartz's book, it is reflective of the creative energies he describes, which at their best and most positive are the antithesis of the totalitarian cultural strains that he labors to expose.

Of course, there is another variety of California revolutionary instinct that has exerted its own transforming power on the nation and the world. Rooted in the same individualism that Schwartz traces to California's founding, its most noted standard-bearer is a Californian no less quintessential in his way, but wiser in his vision, than any artist or politician seduced by collectivism. Although there are a couple of passing references here to Ronald Reagan—whose own experiences with adherents of totalitarianism in Hollywood fitted him to stare down the Soviets in the 1980s—it will remain for another book to chart how the fortieth President brought his own California consciousness from West to East and back again. □

The California Nightmare

ROBERT B. EDGERTON

FOR residents of Los Angeles, and perhaps much of the country, the televised beating of Rodney King, the battering of Reginald Denny, and the incendiary rioting that followed are unforgettable images, nearly as vivid as the assassination of John F. Kennedy. Few who were in Los Angeles that terrible day in April 1992 can forget what they saw on their television screens as the fires spread from South Central Los Angeles to Koreatown, Hollywood, and the fringes of the affluent and mostly white Westside. My wife and I left our upstairs bedroom to sleep downstairs for fear that a Molotov cocktail thrown through a window could create an inferno before we could escape. Our friends reacted as fearfully as we did. The country's second-largest city was engulfed in fear and rage, and the police were nowhere to be seen.

Lou Cannon's carefully crafted account of these events, their causes, and their consequences tells of a tragedy that could have been prevented. World War II began the transformation of Los Angeles from an almost exclusively white Protestant backwater to a mecca for ethnic minorities. As the city grew, so did crime, and in 1950 Chief William Parker took control of the LAPD, giving it a Marine Corps model of incorruptibility and physical fitness, combined with a mission of aggressive policing, that was much admired around the country. Even so, the LAPD was not prepared for the Watts Riots of 1965, when 34 people were killed and more than one thousand injured before the LAPD, assisted by the National Guard, restored order. Mayor Tom Bradley later did much to calm racial tensions. The aerospace industry and booming real-estate values brought prosperity to the city, and the 1984 Olympics (with O. J. Simpson carrying the Olympic torch) brought pride. But by the late 1980s, the pride and prosperity had crumbled, and violent crime, much of it fueled by cocaine, took over much of the city, especially South Central, which was now 50 per cent Latino. The African-American population that remained there was poorer than ever before, as middle-class African-Americans fled to more affluent areas. While the inner-city population grew poorer and more violent, the police department remained small and perilously underfunded.

Skillfully describing how this tinderbox was formed, Cannon helps the reader understand the tensions that erupted after Rodney King's beating. King was struck 56 times with metal batons capable of breaking bones—an unforgettable ordeal which appalled most who saw the videotape, including many police officers. Stressing the ineptitude of the arresting officers in subduing King,

***Official Negligence: How Rodney King and the Riots Changed Los Angeles and the LAPD*, by Lou Cannon (*Times*, 698 pp., $35**

Cannon also points out, in mitigation of their seemingly excessive use of force, the man's size and great strength, and

Mr. Edgerton is a professor of anthropology at UCLA. He is the author of MauMau: An African Crucible *(Free Press).*

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the fact that he charged at Officer Powell. That this charge took place is still not widely known: the TV stations that showed the videotape deleted the first 13 seconds, when the charge took place, because that portion of the tape was blurry.

Thirteen days after the King arrest, a teenaged African-American girl named Latasha Harlins attempted to buy a bottle of orange juice from a Korean woman grocer. An accusation of theft led the girl to punch the grocer. She then put the orange juice down and, with her back turned, walked toward the door. The grocer shot her in the back of the head, killing her. The tragedy was caught on the store's surveillance videotape. A jury convicted the grocer of voluntary manslaughter with a maximum penalty of 11 years in prison, but the judge, citing all manner of extenuating circumstances, sentenced her to probation and a small fine. African-American anger against Korean shopkeepers was already running high, and now it was at flashpoint. When the riots erupted, shouts of "Latasha Harlins" were heard again and again.

Four LAPD officers were charged in the King beating, but, in a decision that defies explanation, instead of their being tried by a racially mixed jury in downtown Los Angeles, a change of venue was granted: to virtually all-white, and famously pro-police, Simi Valley. Their acquittal was now a foregone conclusion, and yet neither the city nor the LAPD took any steps to prepare for a riot. The not-guilty verdicts were announced at 3:15 P.M. on April 29, 1992. An hour later, there began the worst riot in U.S. history since the end of the Civil War. Before it ended, five terrible days later, 54 people had been killed and 2,300 injured, and 862 buildings had been burned. In all, the damage was estimated at $900 million. As the mobs randomly attacked white, Latino, and Asian motorists, the few police in the area were ordered to retreat to a staging area, leaving the rioters free to burn, pillage, and kill.

One of the most notorious episodes, captured live on television, involved the white truck driver, Reginald Denny, who was pulled from his truck, kicked, and beaten. One African-American, Damian "Football" Williams, smashed his skull with a slab of concrete, then danced a jig. Those who saw the attack on television were not shown the sequel: that Denny was rescued by other African-Americans and that two of the five doctors who saved his life were black. What the footage taken by media helicopters did show was that there were no police on the streets, and that more rioters, led by members of street gangs, rushed to the scene. As the rioting began, two-thirds of the LAPD's captains were out of town at a training seminar. Chief Daryl Gates was in his office seemingly unaware of the disturbance; he then drove to distant Brentwood to address a political fundraiser. He later regretted that. Koreatown was targeted early in the riots, losing some two thousand businesses. After the first day, foreign-born Latinos joined in, doing the bulk of the looting.

Before he was beaten, Rodney King charged Officer Powell, a fact not widely known since the TV stations that showed the videotape deleted the first 13 seconds.

In the aftermath of the "riot" or the "uprising," depending on one's point of view, the city engaged in a flurry of political change and fundraising led by Peter Ueberroth, who had organized the 1984 Olympics. But trouble was still in the air as "Football" Williams went to trial and President Bush, with an eye on the elections, asked the Justice Department to retry the officers who had beaten Rodney King. Fear of "civil war" was expressed in the media. When Sergeant Koon and Officer Powell were convicted in this second trial, African-Americans danced in the streets of South Central and horns honked wildly as fully mobilized police officers, sheriff's deputies, and National Guardsmen looked on. The city breathed a collective sigh of relief. When Williams's subsequent conviction did not provoke violence, and Rodney King was awarded $3.8 million in compensatory damages, the city seemed ready to return to what passed for normal life. But then on January 17, 1994, the Northridge earthquake took 72 lives and caused $25 billion in property damage. No one in South Central was killed, and there was little damage there. The quake targeted the San Fernando Valley and the wealthy Westside.

Lou Cannon builds a plausible case that the beating of Rodney King was less a matter of police brutality and racism than one of poor training in the use of the metal side-handle baton and poor judgment by beleaguered officers. The latter included Sergeant Koon, who, thanks to a successful fundraising campaign while he was in prison, received over $9 million during 1994–95, a quarter of which went to his previously destitute wife and five children. Cannon also presents a well-argued case that despite simmering anger in South Central, the riot need not have happened. He concludes by saying that the King case will never be over, never be forgotten. Certainly, no one who reads Cannon's book is likely to forget it. It may not be a coincidence that on the day this review was written, March 1, 1998, the report of the Eisenhower Foundation was released to the press declaring that "poverty has become entrenched in the nation's inner cities, creating a cycle of crime, lack of education, unemployment, and hopelessness." Ominously, all of this is even more true of South Central Los Angeles today than it was in April 1992. □

Homer, R I P?

MARY LEFKOWITZ

WHO killed Homer and brought about, as the subtitle of this book puts it, "the demise of classical education"? We did, according to Victor Davis Hanson and John Heath. "We" in this case is the profession of classical scholars like themselves, and me. How did we do it? By becoming professional scholars in the manner of other humanities professors: instead of concentrating on the education of our students, we are more

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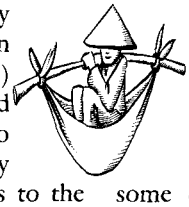
concerned with self-advancement and the approbation of our peers. Masses of articles and books are produced by classical scholars today, and many conferences offered, but, in all that, Professors Hanson and Heath can discover little or nothing which bears on the real reasons for studying the Classics.

Instead, they insist, we need to remind ourselves and our students of the central importance of the Classics. Hanson and Heath offer a vigorous discussion of "Greekness," reminding us of why we need to keep alive the memory of the ancient Greeks and their ideals: the separation of science and philosophy from religion, civilian control of military power, constitutional and consensual government, faith in the wisdom of the average citizen, protection of private property from government interference, and the notion of dissent against religion, government, and the military. Try finding examples of the same values in other ancient Mediterranean civilizations, such as those of Egypt, Persia, or Palestine.

Who Killed Homer? The Demise of Classical Education and the Recovery of Greek Wisdom, by Victor Davis Hanson and John Heath (Free Press, 320 pp., $25)

It is certainly true that those who teach the subject need to believe in "Greekness" and to be willing, with the stamina of ancient citizen-soldiers, to teach it by guiding their students through the works of the great Greek writers in the original language. Their students need a matching degree of courage. Studying ancient Greek is hard, and harder now that students have so little background in English grammar. Students have to confront grammatical gender, cases like the genitive, and, worst of all, the Greek verb. The latter has six principal parts and three grammatical voices (along with active and passive there is a middle, which has no analogy in English); there is an optative as well as a subjunctive, an aorist as well as a perfect, and with it the notion of verbal "aspect," in addition to tense. It takes something akin to religious devotion to be enthusiastic about all this, four or five days a week, at eight-something in the morning.

Both because Greek and Latin are so good and because they are so hard, Hanson and Heath want to put them back at the core of the core curriculum. They rightly point out that current multicultural orthodoxy presents a distorted picture of Greece and Rome, by crediting them (rather than Egypt, Persia, and Palestine) with the institutions of war and slavery. The authors also want to reform the professorate. They recommend paying high salaries to the people who teach the languages and the introductory courses in civilization, and not to the bigwigs who keep turning up at chic conferences. They want to restore honesty to the profession and shorten the PhD course to four years. They want professors to stop talking to other professors and instead reach out to the wider community—the high schools, the talk shows, the newspapers.



Multicultural orthodoxy presents a distorted picture of Greece and Rome, by crediting them with the institutions of war and slavery.

Will Hanson and Heath succeed in their noble quest? Of course not. First, because even if it could be shown that reviving the study of ancient Greek would bring about a massive moral improvement, there are too many forces in the universities that would prevent any such change. Classicists these days are lucky even to be tolerated. Then also, the put-upon tone of the book is hardly likely to appeal even to those most inclined to sympathize with the authors. Why, for example, haven't they called more attention to some of the really exciting work that has been done in Classics? Why not point out that some of us professors actually profit from listening to one another, because listening to experts is one of the most efficient ways to learn about new approaches, discoveries, and ideas? How can they be sure that the professors who deliver boring theoretical papers at conferences are also poor teachers, if they have never visited their classrooms?

I can't help thinking that Aristophanes would have put the case for "Greekness" more effectively, if only because he knew how to be funny. His play *The Clouds* scrutinizes the efforts of Socrates and other sophists active at the time. It makes a case for good old-fashioned morality. It stages a debate between the Unjust Argument and the Just Argument. Justice triumphs in the end. The play's protagonist, Strepsiades, burns down Socrates's think-shop. But Aristophanes also makes Strepsiades and the Just Argument appear blundering and obtuse. It would have helped if Hanson and Heath had had a sense of humor about the good guys in their account of Academe, including first and last themselves. □

Mary Lefkowitz, the Andrew W. Mellon Professor in the Humanities at Wellesley College, is the author of Not Out of Africa: How Afrocentrism Became an Excuse to Teach Myth as History.

TRAVEL

Yo-Ho-Ho, and a Bottle of Rum!

JOHN O'SULLIVAN

SOME years ago, a writer in *Condé Nast Traveler* warmly recommended the island of Grenada for a Caribbean vacation. But it had, he warned, one drawback. You might well run into primitive conservatives, such as R. Emmett Tyrrell Jr. of *The American Spectator* and myself, who were regular visitors to this bastion of anti-Communism. Reading this, I bristled at the implication that I chose my vacation spots on political grounds. Had I not vacationed in Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, Hungary, and the Soviet Union during the Cold War? Indeed, I had even tried to get into Enver Hoxha's Albania in the mid Seventies. (They wouldn't open the door of the Albanian consulate.) Yet

Mr. O'Sullivan is an editor-at-large of NR.

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I had never bothered to visit gallant but chilly little Finland, which maintained a precarious independence from the Bear next door.

My irritation sprang partly from the fact that the political tourism he was attributing to me is usually a left-wing and puritan activity. There used to be a travel agency called something like Utopian Tours which organized package trips to the latest Potemkin paradise. For all I know, despite the shortening list of progressive destinations, it may still exist, ferrying radical labor-union officials, experimental theater directors, agnostic bishops, and socially conscious supermodels to North Korea or a Chinese model prison. But the internal contradiction of political tourism, Comrade, is that there is not much of a correlation between "social justice" and sun, sand, and sensuality. As Garbo, playing a Communist commissar, says in *Ninotchka* about the attractions of Paris: "We have the high ideals, but they have the climate."

Thanks to the convenient location on Grenada of a fine medical school, visitors are well placed to have a heart attack, stroke, or whatever.

Still, I suppose that if a travel agency specializing in post-Communism were to open its doors, Grenada would be one of its better destinations. It was, after all, the first Communist domino to fall in the Cold War. American tourists are popular on the island—the main complaint is that there are not enough of them. And 15 years after "the intervention," there are still many locals with stories to tell of how Reagan saved them. A minor pleasure is sending to liberal friends at home postcards with Grenadian stamps proclaiming: "Ronald Wilson Reagan—Liberator of Grenada." Another stamp has Mrs. Reagan on it too, but you may consider that one too cruel for any but the hardest cases—Michael Kinsley, say.

That said, the conservative tourist will want to judge Grenada by quite different criteria: namely, beaches, bars, hotels, climate—sun, sand, and sensuality, in fact. And though Grenada and its sister island of Carriacou score very high on all these points, both of them are what hardened travelers call "real places" as distinct from tourist bubbles. Grenada is a large (12 miles by 21 miles) and mountainous island, with an interior of deep-green jungle and its own little rainforest. (There is a small damp tour available for ecological tourists.) And with a population of about 100,000, the island has industries in addition to tourism. It grows bananas and spices—in particular the nutmeg that is grated over most of the rum punches in the Caribbean—manufactures several rums of varying strengths and qualities, and supports a small fishing industry. It is also the home of St. George's [medical] University, whose American students, imperiled by a murderous Marxist coup d'état in 1983, were half cause, half pretext for the U.S. intervention.

That university is now a world-class institution. Its academic standards are high, with Nobel Prize–winners on its academic board; it draws its students from all over the world, including the U.S., but seeks especially to attract applicants from Third World countries; and it contributes significantly to the Grenadian economy. For the tourist, its presence offers two advantages. First, you are quite likely to run into entertaining medical expatriates, with a fund of advice and local stories, in bars and restaurants. Second, you are well placed to have a heart attack, stroke, or whatever since the university's two campuses are a coconut's throw from five of the island's larger hotels. Most conventional guidebooks do not give this invaluable information.

The touristic center of Grenada is, of course, the Grand Anse beach—a long curving arc of white sand, fringed with palm trees, on which beats a bath-warm sea. Like all Grenadian beaches, it is public, and amiable hawkers wander along it selling local carvings and fresh coconuts. But three of the island's hotels—the Renaissance, the Coyaba, and the Spice Island Inn—open directly onto the sand. The hotel staff keep the beach clean and tidy, and they ferry drinks, deck chairs, and beach equipment to the somnolent sunbather. More active vacationers can snorkel, water-ski, surf, and parasail. But everyone is eventually tempted into the clear blue water so buoyant that in between bouts of swim-

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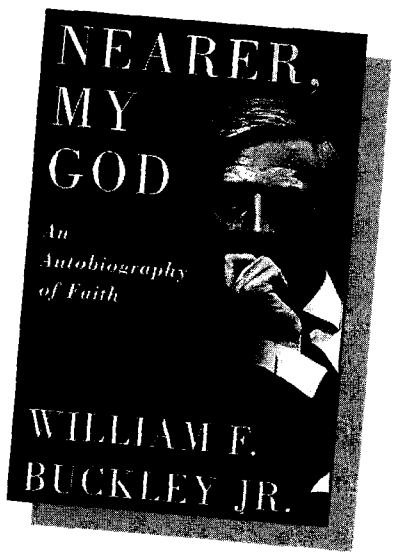

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ming, the tired businessman can rest up by simply closing his eyes and floating along on the waves.

Compared to other islands, Grenada used to be poorly provided with hotels and restaurants. But this is changing. Two major resort hotels, the Rex Grenadian and La Source, have recently opened. They are essentially tourist bubbles from which the vacationer (or, in the case of La Source, the health-conscious tourist) need never venture. This seems odd to me, but it is apparently what many tourists want. Others will prefer the cheerful Coyaba, the up-market Twelve Degrees North (no children), or Secret Harbour (perched above a sheltered inlet on the windward coast), which are plugged into the island's social life. But for my money, and for quite a lot of it, the hotels to choose are the Spice Island Inn, especially its beach cabins, and the Calabash, which, along with many of its guests, has a slightly old-fashioned but very charming air of plumed-hat British colonialism. Both have cozy piano bars and good local entertainment. And there are, of course, any number of small, cheap beach cabins for the backpacker.

As a former British colony, Grenada has no great culinary tradition. All the hotels, however, have good restaurants, and the Calabash has an excellent one. Yet, again for my money (and this time for considerably less of it), the two places to visit are the Aquarium and Tabanca. The Aquarium, which overlooks a small cove excellent for both swimming and surfing, is famous for its Sunday barbecue. Try the lobster, but everything is good, and the French fries are regrettably excellent. And since it is only five minutes away from Point Salines airport and the American Airlines flight that departs at 4:20 P.M., the Aquarium is also the ideal venue for your last Grenadian swim-and-lunch.

Tabanca, poised above one end of the Grand Anse beach, of which it affords a sweeping view, is a romantic spot but, more important, possesses a fine kitchen. Its specialties include fish soup, dressed spiny crab, and all manner of local fish, broiled and fried. Its proprietress, a charming Austrian lady, makes a wonderful rum punch, with more of a citrus tang than most, but her great achievement is an after-dinner drink, the "Brown Girl." The recipe is secret, but the result is up there with Benedictine and Drambuie.

Twenty minutes away by small plane (or two hours by ferry) is Carriacou, a small (two miles by five) island, traditionally a haven for smugglers, now a favorite mooring for yachtsmen, and as far away from the modern world of "telegrams and anger" as one could imagine. Its people are courteous, it is free of crime, and apart from the odd ganja-chewing Rasta the only drug use you will encounter is of the local firewater rum. The better hotels include Silver Beach and the Carribbee Inn, but my own favorite is the Cassada Bay Hotel. Its rooms are comfortable but austere wooden chalets which only recently had hot water installed, and its food is plainly cooked local fare. But its bar and restaurant perch on a headland, a hundred feet above the sea, and look out over the finest view in the Caribbean—ten or more small islands dotted down toward Grenada in the distance. By day that view is of nature at peace; by night it is literally awesome. Gazing out over it while drinking a cold glass of the local Carib beer is one of the great simple pleasures of this world.

That—and, of course, not talking about politics while doing so. □

FILM I

Big Bad Brits (and Other Myths)

JONATHAN FOREMAN

MEDIA people are different, if not from you or me, then from most Americans. They tend to be upper middle class and, if they are in positions of influence, to be Baby Boomers, i.e., between the ages of 35 and 55. Their politics and their values are influenced more by their generational experience than by anything else. You can see these Boomer values in various ways in movies and on television, but they are most clearly revealed in today's often bizarre ethnic and sexual casting conventions. The identity of the villain in particular says a lot about the human qualities the entertainment culture considers especially bad: things like uptightness and fatness. Of course, these days the industry is very much aware that there is good stereotyping and bad stereotyping. Given that "entertainment product" is one of post–Cold War America's biggest and most influential exports, the assumptions behind the distinction are well worth unpacking.

Hollywood's ethnic casting conventions are a strange and constantly shifting tableau. Despite the claims of Spike Lee and others that Afro-American actors are cast only as criminals and servants, the truth is that for nearly two decades now—or at least since *Starsky & Hutch* first appeared on our screens—both movies and TV have had an unwritten rule that all mayors, police chiefs, and police captains must be black. Judges should be black or female or both.

Another rule states that only black writers and directors may make films that feature black criminal gangs. White directors, like Richard Donner in *Lethal Weapon,* should have their heroes face mixed-race gangs (a phenomenon that exists only on celluloid) or white guys in suits. There is nothing wrong with this. It may not accurately reflect reality, but it reflects it better than the industry did in the Sixties when blacks really *were* shown only as criminals, slaves, and victims of oppression.

But recently the industry has begun to go a little further in the direction of wishful thinking. There is now a convention that brilliant physicists should be played by gorgeous babes in short skirts—see *The Peacemaker* (Nicole Kidman) and *The Saint* (Elizabeth Shue). By the same token, Hollywood increasingly likes to have computer and math geniuses played by black men (especially Samuel L. Jackson). See *Terminator 2*, *Jurassic Park,* and *Sphere.* Both are a kind of affirmative action, but, hey, if they encourage black boys and pretty blonde girls to study—and to study science rather than Oppression Studies—what could be wrong with that?

In the first place, this unlikely casting

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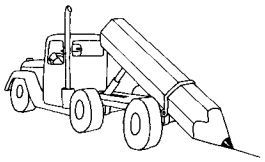
may not have any such effect—and indeed should not, according to the industry's own pronouncements. The studios are constantly telling us that the depiction of something on film has absolutely no effect on audience behavior. That is why limiting female lead roles to leggy young chicks with artificially enhanced breasts doesn't really affect the self-esteem of millions of women or push teenaged girls into anorexia. It's why showing violence as the only solution to most of life's problems plays no role in influencing people to take up arms against their troubles.

But if the studios are right, then we should ask if it might actually be counterproductive to have Stephen Hawking types played by Wesley Snipes or Michelle Pfeiffer. After all, it would be very sad if improbable casting made kids see black or pretty female scientists as just another feature of never-never land, as unlikely as an amusement park full of living dinosaurs. (Of course, what the industry really would have you believe is that audiences take the bad stuff with a pile of salt but are profoundly affected by the good stuff.)

But both casting conventions and the choice of villains for your story pose far more problems than they once did, thanks to two real-life political changes. First, the Cold War is over, and so we've lost the Soviets and their henchmen. Secondly, Hispanics, blacks, and other ethnic groups are no longer willing to accept what they see as negative stereotyping without noisy (and effective) protest. Which means that the industry must pick its foreign and domestic villains very carefully. You mustn't go too far with Latino actors playing Colombian drug dealers. Arabs have been overdone. The Japanese now own one of the biggest studios and the biggest film company, and anyway seem a lot less threatening than they once did. The Chinese are out too (especially at Fox) because we want to sell them stuff.



So who? Well, there are still ruthless big corporations and rogue secret agents and crazed Eastern European nationalists. And as historical films come back into fashion we have lots of historical bad guys, and this is where things get interesting. Old-style historical enemies like the Nazis, the Japanese, and American Indians either are too old-fashioned or turn out to have been in the right. So the industry has discovered the perfect enemy: the English.

English accents are now as obvious a sign of badness as smoking a cigarette or having facial scars. You can see this in the recent crop of revisionist historical movies that you might call the Celtic Vengeance School, *Braveheart* and *Rob Roy* being the two most obvious examples of the genre. The English in both movies are depicted as not only repressive but also cowardly, ruthless, and effeminate all at the same time. Then there is the remake of Kipling's *Jungle Book* in which the Brits are both racist fools and despoilers of the environment. But perhaps the best example is *Titanic*—the Anglophobe's *Birth of a Nation*. In *Titanic*, everyone with an English accent—including the stuffy upper-class Americans—is either a coward, a snob, a fool, or in some cases a combination of all three. One particularly despicable crew member actually shoots a handsome, bearded young Irishman who refuses to accept the rule of "women and children first" and calls him a "Limey bastard." This is acceptable, trouble-free stereotyping: after all, Brits are really just WASPs.

In movies, English accents are now as obvious a sign of badness as smoking a cigarette or having facial scars.

Now, Anglophobia often co-exists with Anglophilia. In fact, one is rarely to be found without the other skulking nearby, and that is as true in Hollywood as it is everywhere else. Americans have had a love–hate relationship with the English since before the Revolution. And of course there are certain ethnic groups in this country with a long-held hatred of the English. That of German–Americans—so strong between the World Wars—seems to have dissipated. That of Irish-Americans has not. To be sure, Hollywood's long love affair with the IRA has nothing to do with Irish-Americans, a group whose presence in the industry is rather small. But in the last few years it has intensified. In recent films like *The Devil's Own* and *The Jackal* IRA terrorists are depicted not just as charming freedom fighters but also as military supermen (not something that even Gerry Adams would claim).

There is also a tradition in Hollywood of having Brits play Germans or Romans in films where Germans or Romans are the bad guys. The accents are a subtle way of stressing the ethnic difference of the villains without actually using subtitles. The English accent also sounds like the kind of accent an organized, hierarchical people like the Romans would have. You know, correct, with good grammar and syntax. It is presumably for this reason that all the Imperial officers in the *Star Wars* trilogy were played by Brits.

There is another, much older American pop-culture tradition which depicts Europeans more generally as incarnations of evil. It is a tradition which sees Americans as simple, idealistic, and virtuous, and Europeans as cultivated but corrupt and cynical. My favorite modern manifestation of it is the excellent movie *Die Hard*. Here, a sweat-stained, foul-mouthed, heroic Bruce Willis battles high-tech Euroterrorists who take over a Los Angeles skyscraper. In perhaps an ideal ethnic combination they seem to be a gang of long-haired Germans led by the British Alan Rickman (Kevin Costner's foe in the PC remake of *Robin Hood*). In *Die Hard 3*, Jeremy Irons plays the Rickman role. And in *Cliffhanger*, the American John Lithgow with an unexplained but flawless English accent plays the murderous rogue CIA agent who wants to kill Sylvester Stallone. The subtext of all these films—and all the ones in which the villain is played by Anthony Price or Gary Oldman—is that we may not be all that cultured and smooth, but we will beat you by virtue of our good hearts, our courage, and our sheer ferocity in combat.

THIS all sounds harmless enough. And it means work for lots of talented, classically trained British actors who are happy to play psychopaths and/or colonial exploiters for a Hollywood salary. However, Anglophobia in movies and TV has much greater significance than one might at first think, because the emergence of the English as Hollywood's ultra-villains symbolically expresses fundamental Baby Boomer/liberal values. Antipathy to

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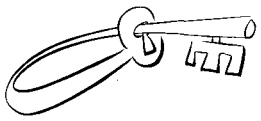
all those stuffy, overdressed Brits really expresses Boomer attitudes toward the past, toward authority, toward discipline, toward responsibility, indeed toward everything about their parents' world. In this sense, Hollywood Brit-bashing is a kind of Oedipal acting-out.

Boomers, who have so much invested in the cults of informality and authenticity—whether that means dressing like a teenager, or wanting their children to go to schools where they can call teachers by their first name—need constantly to have their prejudices confirmed. They want to feel better about not giving their seat to the pregnant woman on the bus, about their uncontrollable, grabby children, about feeling uncomfortable being adults.

Does it matter? Why shouldn't we indulge the Hollywood Boomers' delusions? If you think that films and television do have any influence on belief or behavior, then the Evil Brit trend may well be bad news. For one thing, we live in a society where some students are taught that the United States Constitution was inspired by the Iroquois, that the Greeks stole science from Africans, and that the Aztecs were sweeties who didn't really eat people like popcorn. Anglophobic movies may well serve to make these ludicrous notions seem less implausible.

They might also lead to dangerous errors of judgment. After all, anyone who believes that the English are effeminate, semantically correct twits should take care not to get caught in the middle of a European soccer riot involving the fans of an English team. The Argentines made an analogous mistake back in 1981 and it was not a pleasant experience. There are other practical problems with dismissing the Limeys as an epicene race of tyrants: if we rid ourselves of our English inheritance, does that entail jettisoning the rule of law or just Shakespeare and the herbaceous border?



Finally there is the problem symbolized by Alan Rickman in the Kevin Costner *Robin Hood*. Here you have an agent of feudal authority who gets all the good lines and all the girls before getting it in the neck from the boring good guys. An English poet who wrote about Adam and Eve once found it hard not to make Satan rather attractive. Today we certainly shouldn't underestimate the danger of giving the Devil an English accent. □

FILM II

Reshufflings of Things Past

JOHN SIMON

IF inadvertent farce is your bag, ***The Man in the Iron Mask*** should provide you three bags full. It claims to be "based upon the novel by Alexandre Dumas," but never trust a "based upon"; the truth, when it exists in Hollywood, is always "based *on*." The movie was written and directed by Randall Wallace, who previously merely wrote *Braveheart*, but all this writing and directing and basing upon was too much for him. The resulting concoction has less to do with Dumas than with a shambles.

What to make of a movie in which "d'Artagnan" is pronounced four different ways? Correctly in the French manner, and also "dart onyon," "darTANNyan," and, as if it were Armenian, "dartainian"? Accents pullulate: Gérard Depardieu's Porthos sounds like Inspector Clouseau; Jeremy Irons's Aramis is pure British; John Malkovich's Athos (also variously pronounced), Midwestern; Gabriel Byrne's d'Artagnan, Americanized Irish; Leonardo DiCaprio's man in the iron mask and Louis XIV are carefully learned stage-and-screen American.

If you feel that two Leonardo DiCaprios are too much for a single movie, I would add only that even one may be excessive. Yet weren't there always two of them? The one who, in some shots, is a very pretty young man, and the other who, in different shots, is a somewhat homely girl? I can't speak to his acting, so overwhelmed am I by his twinned unreality—as unreal as this supposed iron mask made out of, I think, hard rubber. The historical one was black velvet with iron hinges, but forget about history.

Wallace's writing falls somewhere between baroque and bizarre. The evil and lecherous young Louis causes the death of Athos's son in order to possess the boy's fiancée, Christine, and palavers as follows: "I know this day for you the world has spun round more than once and is still spinning; but let us sit down for dinner and perhaps you can bring it to a pause." Understandably, Christine puts up only the feeblest resistance, especially when also told, "Of all the wonders I have seen, I have never looked upon anything as wonderful," which, besides lame syntax, features that irresistible *upon*. The drunkard Porthos,

If you feel that two Leonardo DiCaprios are too much for a single movie, I would add only that even one may be excessive. Yet weren't there always two of them?

about to fight against impossible odds, declares, "I would rather die like this than drown in my own piss," although his wit may escape an audience for which cracking a safe would be easier than penetrating Depardieu's English.

The plot hinges on the former musketeers' plan to replace the vicious young king with Philippe, his identical twin, a fine young man who, freed from his cumbersome mask, would make a model monarch. Their difficult scheme would prove easy were it not for d'Artagnan, who as captain of the royal guard (or something like that) is loyal to Louis, beastly though he be, and thus becomes the one of the famous foursome who is not for all. The poor sap is unaware that, as Queen Anne's lover, it is he who engendered the twins.

I confess that the script's finer points were wasted upon me, but I enjoyed the beauty of the French landscapes, châteaux, and actresses—Anne Parillaud (Anne) and Judith Godrèche (Christine). Peter Suschitzky's cinematography is accomplished, whereas Nick

(Continues on page 61)

Mr. Simon is NR*'s film critic.*

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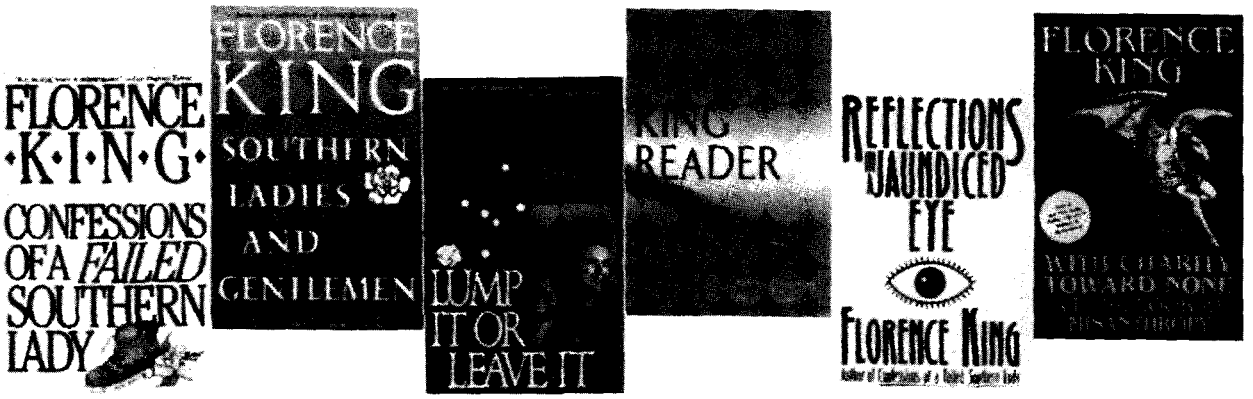

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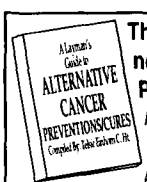

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SIMON

(Continued from page 58)

Glennie-Smith's score is merely perpetrated: a relentless criminal assault on the ear, of a piece with the dialogue. Should *The Man in the Iron Mask* dislodge *Titanic* from its No. 1 spot at the box office, I can envision a time when a film's success will depend on the number of DiCaprios it contains.

■ Agnès Merlet's second feature, ***Artemisia***, deals with how Artemisia Gentileschi (1593–1653) became a painter. She was not the first female artist of stature in Italy, having been preceded by the sculptress Properzia de' Rossi and the painter Sofonisba Anguissola; but she was the first woman to leave an ineradicable mark on Western painting. The movie about her will prove rather more eradicable.

Artemisia was much more interesting than the headstrong tomboy conjured up by Miss Merlet's screenplay and direction, or Valentina Cervi's humdrum screen presence. Though influenced by Caravaggio just like her painter father, Orazio, Artemisia was no copycat, as a comparison of Caravaggio's *Judith Beheading Holofernes* with Artemisia's version clearly shows: her more realistic rendering conveys the enormous effort involved in the act. But the film is not concerned with such things.

The sensational event in the 19-year-old girl's life was her seduction by the much older Agostino Tassi, a painter who collaborated with Orazio and was giving Artemisia lessons in perspective. But she took to the lessons in sex just as much, until her father, fearful for her reputation, sued Tassi. The records of the sensational trial survive only in truncated form; not even the verdict is preserved. Two things are known: that Artemisia was tortured in Agostino's presence to extract the truth, and that he could not make amends by marrying her because he was married already.

Miss Merlet tries to make a meal out of this melodramatic story, but does not manage to generate excitement: her dialogue is flatfooted, and her Artemisia is just a tomboyish girl hellbent on learning to paint. As women were not allowed to use nude male models, or even to study at the Academy, Artemisia persuades a young male friend whose advances she fends off, to show her his private parts. We also see her assisting her father's studio work in various menial ways, and watching (to learn anatomy) a couple copulating on a beach. And other such things.

But we never get a sense of her relation to her art, and both Orazio and Agostino remain conventional figures with which even such good actors as Michel Serrault and Miki Manojlović cannot do much. The budget must have been skimpy, and so we do not get a feel of Rome as a city, only as isolated buildings, which further disorients us. Add to this a ghastly, incessant score by a composer whose chief interest is in his name: Krishna Levy. Miss Merlet speaks proudly of not imitating visually Artemisia's painting; luckily she did not accomplish her aim, and Benoît Delhomme's quasi-mannerist images are the movie's sole virtue.

■ From Baroque painter to Renaissance poetess and courtesan: ***Dangerous Beauty*** is the purportedly true story of Veronica Franco (1546–1591). The author of the *Terze Rime*, Veronica was more famous as a beauty and courtesan who, among other things, gave the future Henri III of France one of his most memorable nights. Sampling the great courtesan's prowess may have been recommended to him by Marco Venier, one of Veronica's many lovers—not, as in the movie, her one true love.

Veronica's story is interesting, but nothing like the sentimental twaddle cooked up by Jeannine Dominy (her first produced screenplay) and directed by Marshall Herskovitz (guiding light of TV's *thirtysomething*). This "true story" adapts Margaret Rosenthal's *The Honest Courtesan*, which is like basing a true story of the Civil War on Margaret Mitchell's *Gone With the Wind*. True, Veronica's mother, Paola, was also a courtesan, who instructed and pimped for her daughter, and there *was* a court case, though nothing like the one in the film. But as for the rest . . .

Well, we do at least get, as mother and daughter, Jacqueline Bisset and Catherine McCormack, fine actresses and beauties at their autumnal and vernal best. But also the preposterous villain Maffio, hammed up by Oliver Platt, and, as Marco, the English actor Rufus Sewell, who resents being called "Byronic." With his tightly curled black thatch and bulging black eyes, he looks more ovine than Byronic, but he does have a gaze to melt holes into the heart of any woman or passing sheep. □

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ON THE RIGHT / Wm. F. Buckley Jr.

The People Aren't Always Right

NEW YORK, MARCH 24

We ought to be a little careful on the matter of the popularity ratings of Mr. Clinton. In almost any match between the people and their intellectual leaders it is wise to bet with the former. But the temptation to make a rule out of this preference is dangerous, and something on that order is happening when you hear it said that the approval ratings of Mr. Clinton are dispositive: If the people don't care—what business do you have caring?

The majority, in democratic practice, is powerful enough to tell us who will serve in the White House and in Congress. The Founders of course recognized the dangers of impulsive democracy, which is why it takes a lot of agitation to amend the Constitution. Now on the matter of the public behavior of Mr. Clinton, two questions are asked. The first, Is the majority certain that he is guilty? The second, How grave is the offense with which he is charged?

Under oath, Mr. Clinton contradicted his 1992 statement affirming his innocence of an affair with Gennifer Flowers. Yes, he now says, he did it: once. The popular assumption is I think correct, namely that if a President is re-elected, something on the order of a plenary indulgence is effected, which holds him harmless from responsibility for previous crimes and misdemeanors. The Paula Jones lawsuit isn't disturbed by this assumption inasmuch as hers is a civil suit. What now happens becomes a matter of congressional concern only if the jury finds for Mrs. Jones, the result of which would be a perjury count against Mr. Clinton.

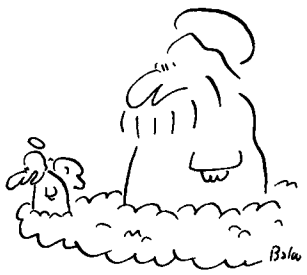
But here, surely, a reservation should be indulged. Peter Galbraith, retiring ambassador to Croatia, shrewdly pointed out in January that it is careless to distinguish between the offense of adultery and the offense of lying about it, inasmuch as the second offense goes hand in hand with the first. Anyone who commits adultery is expected to lie about it. Indeed, the point can be made persuasively that it is dishonorable not to lie about it.

But what is happening around the President transcends one or one hundred nights out with Gennifer or a wild bout of exhibitionism with Paula Jones. The architecture of his defense betrays his weakness and demeans democratic practice. He refuses for weeks on end to explain his denial of his entanglement with Monica Lewinsky—leaving the world wondering why she visited with him 37 times. Now he has pleaded executive privilege to hide from the scrutiny of justice such testimony as members of his staff might provide. The Supreme Court will overrule him, but the effort, in the light of the precedent of Richard Nixon, is itself contumacious, a sign of contempt for the law and its processes.

Now at what point do the people inform, or cease to inform, the Congress in these matters? If the people, sending signals to their representatives, tell them: No matter what he does, don't impeach Mr. Clinton, they can send that signal. And the question becomes, Should Congress be governed by it?

It is always relevant what the moral perspective is in any situation. It is presumptuous to assume that we are keener moral spirits than the men who wrote the Constitution because unlike them we would not tolerate slavery. The key is perspective: in a world in which slavery was commonplace, it is the prophet who cries out against it, not the people, or their institutions. It required a civil war with half a million dead to change those perspectives, and even then what mostly changed was the law, not the moral understanding of the obligations of equality, given that we are all creatures of God.

It is not inconceivable, at some point ahead, that we will be asking ourselves: What is the matter with the general public? Why does it not understand the gravity of what is happening? W. B. Yeats wrote a letter, back in the Thirties, to the Dublin daily which had published serial criticisms of the mayor of Dublin, the most recent of which had asked, "What has the Lord Mayor of Dublin recently done to commend himself to the people of Dublin?" Yeats's letter read, "What have the people of Dublin recently done to commend themselves to the Lord Mayor?" The impending situation is not to be compared with the popular approval given in our time to such as Hitler, Mussolini, and Perón. But we are properly reminded by those data that from time to time it is appropriate to wonder about the judgment of the people. □



"Now, let's hope it doesn't sink the way that Martian *ark did."*

Williwaw On the President

NEW YORK, MARCH 20

A distinguished critic e-mails me: "Is it possible to know *anything* about the Clinton business?" This is an epistemological cri de coeur: How-the-hell do we know what to believe?

Two nights after Mrs. Willey's exposure on *60 Minutes*, the *NewsHour with Jim Lehrer* did a regional survey, questioning four or five press analysts. The contributor who sticks in the memory is Mr. Gene Lyons, of the *Arkansas Democrat-Gazette*. He was forthrightly on the side of Mr. Clinton, which committed him to disparaging the testimony of Mrs. Willey. One remembers several observations.

The first was that Mrs. Willey was not . . . really . . . a stable character. Evidence of this is that she called one or two people hysterically at three in the morning accusing them of responsibility for the suicide of her husband.

Now we should agree, this being the reasonable thing to do, that it is wrong to call *anybody* up at three in the morning, except perhaps to say, "Darling, I'm pregnant!" On the other hand, a *Social Guide to Appropriate Behavior Immediately after One's Spouse Commits Suicide* has not been written. What would you do, or rather promise *not* to do, if your husband committed suicide after John, Jim, and Bob went after him for money he owed them? Hard to say, but a hysterical call at three in the morning would hardly suggest terminal instability.

And then Mr. Lyons said that, you know, I happen to . . . know several women . . . lots of women who know Bill Clinton and they say—he's just not the

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kind of person who does that kind of thing.

Gasp. We are back with the Irishman being tried for murder who wants to bring in 35 people who did *not* see him kill the girl.

And then the next day there was the publication of ten letters written to Mr. Clinton by Mrs. Willey, here and there congratulating him on his Presidency, confessing her economic plight, even suggesting herself as an appropriate ambassador. Some of these letters signed off, "Fondly."

There is a lot of spin energy in the release of those letters. Why would Mrs. Willey fondle the President in her correspondence if she was so mad at him? And where does she get off nominating herself for an ambassadorship, given her qualifications? What qualifications? After her husband's death she worked intermittently at a bread factory and a hair salon. That sounds like entry-level work. And anyway, why did she need to go to the President of the United States to get a job, when unemployment was running at about 6 per cent? Ah!!!! He owed her something. But that would provoke a counter-spin. Since he didn't give her a fancy job, he didn't feel threatened by her; therefore there was nothing for her to threaten him with, therefore he is Not Guilty.

But the intended effect of the release of the letters was pretty straightforward. How could anyone who had been treated as Mrs. Willey alleged she had been treated continue a relationship apparently affable? Here are solemn words spoken on the general subject, picked up by the *Wall Street Journal*. "One of the things we've all been learning about on the subject of sexual harassment is what goes on inside the mind of a victim which sometimes leads that person to keep silent about it and to continue maintaining a façade of friendship and an outward relationship so long as that secret is kept." Author? Senator Al Gore, speaking in 1991, on Anita Hill.

Does Mrs. Willey's apparent willingness to retail her story invalidate it? People who are blasé about commerce should give thirty seconds' thought to what happened to Kathleen Willey. Her husband persuaded her to co-sign a note for about three hundred thousand dollars. When he killed himself, Mrs. Willey gave up any participation in the insurance, turning her share over to her two children. She has to come up with the money or go bankrupt. These words are not intended as counsel to Mrs. Willey, but are intended to raise the question: In such circumstances, is it so wrong to tell your story in print, for money?

A solomonic solution comes to mind. A public polygraph test! If she fails, let her go bankrupt, and the hell with her. If she passes—President Clinton gives her an ambassadorship. □

Tobacco Settlement Time?

NEW YORK, MARCH 17

Legislators are maneuvering adroitly to position themselves for the tobacco Armageddon coming up. It is sobering to heavy political spenders that notwithstanding that the tobacco industry spent copiously in the last political campaign, nothing very much appears to have been accomplished. A tobacco bill of some sort is coming in, and it can be said that it is coming in from left field if it's true that the political Left tends to be intrusive in the matter of (non-sexual) human behavior. There are also impulses from the Right, if it's true that the Right tends to be distinctively protective of young people.

Meanwhile, Philip Morris et al. are all over the place, advertising in the press and on TV their version of a desirable tobacco settlement. 1) Lots of money, 2) a ban on cigarette vending machines, 3) disclosure of all health-related research, and 4) a ban on secondhand smoke in public places.

What do they get in return? They want a yearly cap on damages of five billion dollars. If your lawyer gets a ten-billion-dollar judgment, the second half of the award would not be payable until next year. Since it is at this point likelier than not that juries are going to be awarding larger and larger judgments as we blacken the image of the weedmakers, it is not improbable that after a year or two the companies would be paying out five billion in annual damages—forever. What this means is as simple as that they are willing to add five billion per year to the X billion dollars they are already willing to step forward and pay up.

At this moment, the front lines of the quarrel engage the question of secondhand-smoke damage, and of child protection. Jacob Sullum, a senior editor of the libertarian monthly *Reason*, has written a very readable book called *For Your Own Good*. Mr. Sullum does not smoke but will die in defense of the right of others to smoke. His book is a persuasive polemic against the shower-adjusters of this world whose great hands reach into your quarters and insist that the temperature you are enjoying is really just a little too hot, or else a little too cold. But Sullum devastatingly reviews the evidence that we are all victimized by our neighbors' smoking. Yes, there is some effect from the other person's smoke, but it is very weak. "The EPA estimated that living with a smoker increases your risk of lung cancer by 19 per cent. In contrast, smoking increases your risk of lung cancer by 1,000 per cent." The tobacco companies' willingness to give up on the anti-smoking-in-public-quarters crusade is significant but also shrewd. They are prepared to let that battle be fought out by the smokers themselves, whose indignation could easily take effective political shape in the months and years ahead.

On the matter of young people, the question has to do with what can be done to children by adults and what can't be done to children by adults. In Idaho they are considering a draconian law which would imprison anyone selling to a minor from an establishment that does not have a permit to sell cigarettes. Now the Tobacco Settlement, in addition to agreeing to ban vending machines, volunteers $500 million per year for a campaign to dissuade young people from smoking; and throws in a ban "on the use of cartoon characters or human figures in . . . advertising."

Why they need such advertising is a puzzle, since Hollywood is doing it for free. Reports the *Wall Street Journal*, ". . . smoking in movies is continuing to flourish. Julia Roberts puffs away in *My Best Friend's Wedding*, a movie that young teenage girls helped turn into a blockbuster. . . . University of California at San Francisco researchers analyzed five top-grossing films each year and found that while only one lead character smoked in 1990, 80 per cent of moviedom's male leads lit up in 1991–96." Leonardo DiCaprio and Kate Winslet hardly had time to drown in *Titanic*, so busy were they puffing away.

But people do not go gladly into the dark night of economic extinction. If the tobacco industries were really to succeed in abolishing teenage smoking, they would wake up one day without enough money to pay their annual five billion dollars in damages. What they very much fear is what such as Jacob Sullum resent for philosophical reasons, namely a buck-and-a-half increase per pack. I have been brought up on the neat little formula that a 4 per cent rise in cigarette prices means a 1 per cent reduction in cigarette use. This transcribes to a 25 per cent reduction in smoking if the proposed bill went into law. That's a lot fewer cigarettes sold, an objective in which everyone can find pleasure and pain. □

(Universal Press Syndicate)

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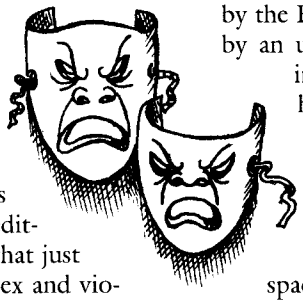
THE MISANTHROPE'S CORNER

FLORENCE KING

ACCORDING to the rules of what is lately called "full disclosure" I should ask everyone who loved *Braveheart* to leave the room now, but since that includes nearly all conservatives there would be no one left to read what I'm going to say. Let me stipulate, then, that my quarrel is not with macho heroes or patriotism but with the lack of discipline, self-indulgence, and carelessness of today's moviemakers.



Going to the movies is no longer an option due to my distaste for being in dark auditoriums with my so-called peers, but I finally saw *Braveheart* a few weeks ago on NBC. It was "edited for television" but that just means they cut some sex and violence. Otherwise the version I saw reinforces the first of my several objections: even with cuts it still was so long that it took two nights to run.

I expected it to kick off with Robert Burns's electrifying "Scots Wha' Hae Wi' Wallace Bled" sung by a male chorus like the one that sang "Men of Harlech" in *How Green Was My Valley*. Instead, the interminable title sequence was accompanied by a soloist playing a tuneless air on the Celtic uilliann. It was the kind of music I associate with free concerts at art galleries.

Establishment shots are stock footage of an instantly recognizable location to let the audience know where the story takes place. One establishment shot will do, but *Braveheart* never stopped establishing the fact that we were in Scotland. Mist-covered braes (See? That's Scotland). Mountain tarns (Look! Didn't I tell you it was Scotland?), Moors, moors, moors (Now that's really Scotland!). Heather, heather, heather (Hey, the Scottish national flower, right?). Cairns, peat fires, wee cots (You better believe it, this is Scotland, man!).

These atmospherics involved no action or anything to hold the viewer's interest. *The Quiet Man* contained a long shot of a steep Irish hill but Maureen O'Hara was walking up it, which made all the difference. In *Braveheart* we get a lot of ethereal stalling designed to camouflage what is, despite all the praise it won, a badly flawed script.

The backstory that opens the movie is a case in point. All we need to know is that William Wallace's father was killed by the English, and that he was adopted by an uncle who was something of an intellectual. John Ford could have wrapped it up in five minutes max, but Mel Gibson drags it out with rambling dialogue and static shots of the boy Wallace blinking and thinking of Scotland as he stares off into space at the moors and the cairns and the mountain tarns.

So much attention is paid to the where that the who, what, why, and when are given short shrift. With a third of American college students unable to place their own Civil War in the right century, a movie about the Middle Ages must explain historical facts and figures in quick and vivid ways, but *Braveheart* presents an unnamed English monarch as a generic king out of a fairy tale with nothing to identify him except the sobriquet "Longshanks."

Those of us raised in the bad old days of rote learning know that he was Edward I (1272-1307) of the House of Plantagenet, a family that ran to tall, lanky physiques. He was known as the "Hammer of the Scots" and the "English Justinian" for his contribution to the development of law, but his popular fame rests on two things that even the most untutored audiences have heard of. Both would be very easy to bring out in a movie and would serve to "place" him, evoking that shock of recognition that makes historical characters come to life.

The first concerns the "Eleanor Crosses." When Edward's adored wife, Eleanor of Castile, died on the Scottish border while accompanying him on his wars, he escorted her body back to London and ordered a stone cross to be erected wherever the cortège stopped for the night. The last and most elaborate of these monuments to the woman he called his "*chère reine*" was erected in a village outside London afterwards called Charing Cross.

The second story concerns the world's most famous title. Early in their marriage Queen Eleanor accompanied Edward on his Welsh campaigns and gave birth to a son in Caernarvon Castle. When the Welsh barons demanded that their country be ruled by "a Welsh-born prince who speaks no English," the wily Edward supposedly held up his new son and said, "Here is your Prince of Wales."

AUDIENCES reminded of these stories would say, "Oh, *that* king!" instead of "Which king?" Connecting the historical dots also would have solidified the identity of the movie's burlesqued homosexual prince: he was that baby.

On the second night, near the end of Part II, I finally yelled, "They can take our homes, they can take our women, but they can't take our common sense!" What set me off was the scene in which Princess Isabella visits Wallace in his cell and, saying she has something to make his execution painless, transfers a mysterious liquid from her mouth to his during their final kiss.

What, pray, was the liquid? If a soporific to deaden the pain of his scheduled evisceration had been available in 1305 it would have advanced surgery by centuries and taken the medieval out of medieval dentistry. If it was poison, how did she transport it orally without poisoning herself? If it was in a vial or a goose bladder why didn't she just hand it to him? How was she able to talk with something like that in her mouth?

Confusing, overlong movies are a major cause of the crude audience behavior that keeps me out of theaters. The only way to make a large group of strangers behave in the dark is to keep the leash of artistry taut around their necks, but don't expect today's moviemakers to do it. Selectivity is the first principle of art but the last principle of democracy. The artist's duty to pick and choose, to include and eliminate, to put things in their proper place is inimical to our times. It was a war waiting to happen, and art lost. □

Miss King is the author of The Florence King Reader *and other books.*

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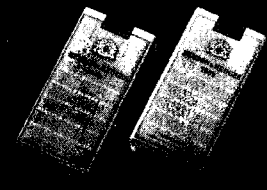

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